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NOVELS AND ROMANCES

OF

THE AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY

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PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.

“ If my readers should at any time remark that I am particularly dull, they may be assured there is a design under it.”—*British Essayist*.

PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.

CHAP. I.

Now, hoist the anchor, mates—and let the sails
Give their broad bosom to the buxom wind,
Like lass that wooes a lover.

Anonymous.

THE presence of the Countess dispelled the superstitious feeling, which, for an instant, had encroached on Julian's imagination, and compelled him to give attention to the matters of ordinary life. "Here are your credentials," she said, giving him a small packet carefully put up in a seal-skin cover; "you had better not open them till you come to London. You must not be surprised to find that there are one or two addressed to men of my own persuasion. These, for all our sakes, you will observe caution in delivering."

"I go your messenger, madam," said Peveril;

“and whatever you desire me to charge myself with, of that I undertake the care. Yet allow me to doubt whether an intercourse with Catholics will at this moment forward the purposes of my mission.”

“You have caught the general suspicion of this wicked sect already,” said the Countess, smiling, “and are the fitter to go amongst Englishmen in their present mood. But, my cautious friend, these letters are so addressed, and the persons to whom they are addressed so disguised, that you will run no danger in conversing with them. Without their aid, indeed, you will not be able to obtain the accurate information you go to seek. None can tell so exactly how the wind sets, as the pilot whose vessel is exposed to the storm. Besides, though you Protestants deny our priesthood the harmlessness of the dove, you are ready enough to allow us a full share of the wisdom of the serpent;—in plain terms, their means of information are extensive, and they are not deficient in the power of applying it. I therefore wish you to have the benefit of their intelligence and advice, if possible.”

“Whatever you impose on me as a part of my duty, madam, rely on its being discharged punctually,” answered Peveril. “And now, as there is little use in deferring execution of a purpose when once fixed, let me know your ladyship’s wishes concerning my departure.”

“It must be sudden and secret,” said the Countess; “the island is full of spies; and I would not wish that any of them should have notice that an envoy of mine was about to leave Man for London. Can you be ready to go on board to-morrow?”

“To-night—this instant if you will,” said Julian,—“my little preparations are complete.”

“Be ready, then, in your chamber, at two hours after midnight. I will send one to summon you, for our secret must be communicated, for the present, to as few as possible. A foreign sloop is engaged to carry you over; then make the best of your way to London, by Martindale Castle or otherwise, as you find most advisable. When it is necessary to announce your absence, I will say you are gone to see your parents. But stay—your journey will be on horseback, of course, from Whitehaven. You have bills of exchange, it is true; but are you provided with ready money to furnish yourself with a good horse?”

“I am sufficiently rich, madam,” answered Julian; “and good nags are plenty in Cumberland. There are those among them who know how to come by them good and cheap.”

“Trust not to that,” said the Countess. “Here is what will purchase for you the best horse on the Borders.—Can you be simple enough to refuse it?” she added, as she pressed on him a heavy purse, which he saw himself obliged to accept.

“A good horse, Julian,” said the Countess, “and a good sword, next to a good heart and head, are the accomplishments of a cavalier.”

“I kiss your hands, then, madam,” said Peveril, “and humbly beg you to believe, that whatever may fail in my present undertaking, my purpose to serve you, my noble kinswoman and benefactress, can at least never swerve or falter.”

“I know it, my son, I know it ; and may God forgive me if my anxiety for your friend has sent you on dangers which should have been his. Go—go—May saints and angels bless you ! Fenella shall acquaint him that you sup in your own apartment. So indeed will I ; for to-night I should be unable to face my son’s looks. Little will he thank me for sending you on his errand ; and there will be many to ask, whether it was like the Lady of Latham to thrust her friend’s son on the danger which should have been found by her own. But O ! Julian, I am now a forlorn widow, whom sorrow has made selfish.”

“Tush, madam,” answered Peveril ; “it is more unlike the Lady of Latham to anticipate dangers which may not exist at all, and to which, if they do indeed occur, I am less obnoxious than my noble kinsman. Farewell ! All blessings attend you, madam. Commend me to Derby, and make him my excuses. I will expect a summons at two hours after midnight.”

They took an affectionate leave of each other ; the more affectionate, indeed, on the part of the Countess, that she could not entirely reconcile her generous mind to exposing Peveril to danger on her son's behalf ; and Julian betook himself to his solitary apartment.

His servant soon afterwards brought him wine and refreshments ; to which, notwithstanding the various matters he had to occupy his mind, he contrived to do reasonable justice. But when this needful occupation was finished, his thoughts began to stream in upon him like a troubled tide—recalling at once the past, and anticipating the future. It was in vain that he wrapped himself in his riding cloak, and, lying down on his bed, endeavoured to compose himself to sleep. The uncertainty of the prospect before him—the doubt how Bridgenorth might dispose of his daughter during his absence—the fear that the Major himself might fall into the power of the vindictive Countess, besides a numerous train of vague and half-formed apprehensions, agitated his blood, and rendered slumber impossible. Alternately to recline in the old oaken easy-chair, and listen to the dashing of the waves under the windows, mingled, as the sound was, with the scream of the sea-birds ; or to traverse the apartment with long and slow steps, pausing occasionally to look out on the sea, slumbering under the influence of a full moon,

which tipped each wave with silver—such were the only pastimes he could invent, until midnight had passed for one hour, when the next was wasted in anxious expectation of the summons of departure.

At length it arrived—a tap at his door was followed by a low murmur, which made him suspect that the Countess had again employed her mute attendant as the most secure minister of her pleasure on this occasion. He felt something like impropriety in this selection ; and it was with a feeling of impatience alien to the natural generosity of his temper, that, when he opened the door, he beheld the dumb maiden standing before him. The lamp which he held in his hand shewed his features distinctly, and probably made Fenella aware of the expression which animated them. She cast her large dark eyes mournfully on the ground ; and, without again looking him in the face, made him a signal to follow her. He delayed no longer than was necessary to secure his pistols in his belt, wrap his cloak closer around him, and take his small portmanteau under his arm. Thus accoutred, he followed her out of the Keep, or inhabited part of the Castle, by a series of obscure passages leading to a postern gate, which she unlocked with a key, selected from a bundle which she carried at her girdle.

They now stood in the castle-yard, in the open

moonlight, which glimmered white and ghastly on the variety of strange and ruinous objects to which we have formerly alluded, and which gave the scene rather the appearance of some ancient cemetery, than of the interior of a fortification. The round and elevated tower—the ancient mount, with its quadrangular sides facing the ruinous edifices which once boasted the name of Cathedral—seemed of yet more antique and anomalous form, when seen by the pale light which now displayed them. To one of those churches Fenella took the direct course, and was followed by Julian ; although he at once divined, and was superstitious enough to dislike, the path which she was about to adopt. It was by a secret passage through this church, that in former times the guard-room of the garrison, situated at the lower and external defences, communicated with the Keep of the Castle ; and through this passage were the keys of the Castle every night carried to the Governor's apartment, so soon as the gates were locked, and the watch set. The custom was given up in James the First's time, and the passage abandoned, on account of the well-known legend of the *Manthe Dog*—a fiend, or demon, in the shape of a large, shaggy, black mastiff, by which the church was haunted. It was devoutly believed, that in former times this spectre became so familiar with mankind, as to appear almost nightly in the guard-room, issuing

from the passage which we have mentioned at night, and retiring to it at day-break. The soldiers became partly familiarized to its presence ; yet not so much so as to use any licence of language while the apparition was visible ; until one fellow, rendered daring by intoxication, swore he would know whether it was dog or devil, and, with his drawn sword, followed the spectre when it retreated by the usual passage. The man returned in a few minutes, sobered by terror, his mouth gaping, and his hair standing on end ; but, unhappily for the lovers of the marvellous, altogether unable to disclose the horrors which he had seen. Under the evil repute arising from this tale of wonder, the guard-room was abandoned, and a new one constructed. In like manner, the guards after that period held another and more circuitous communication with the Governor or Seneschal of the Castle ; and that which lay through the ruinous church was entirely abandoned.

In defiance of the legendary terrors which tradition had attached to the original communication, Fenella, followed by Peveril, now boldly traversed the ruinous vaults through which it lay—sometimes only guided over heaps of ruins by the precarious light of the lamp borne by the dumb maiden—sometimes having the advantage of a gleam of moonlight, darting into the dreary abyss through the shafted windows, or through breaches made by

time. As the path was by no means a straight one, Peveril could not but admire the intimate acquaintance with the mazes which his singular companion displayed, as well as the boldness with which she traversed them. He himself was not so utterly void of the prejudices of the times, but that he contemplated, with some apprehension, the possibility of their intruding on the lair of the phantom-hound, of which he had heard so often ; and in every remote sigh of the breeze among the ruins, he thought he heard him baying at the mortal footsteps which disturbed his gloomy realm. No such terrors, however, interrupted their journey ; and in the course of a few minutes, they attained the deserted and now ruinous guard-house. The broken walls of the little edifice served to conceal them from the sentinels, one of whom was keeping a drowsy watch at the lower gate of the Castle ; whilst another, seated on the stone steps which communicated with the parapet of the bounding and exterior wall, was slumbering, in full security, with his musket peacefully grounded by his side. Fenella made a sign to Peveril to move with silence and caution, and then shewed him, to his surprise, from the window of the deserted guard-room, a boat, for it was now high water, with four rowers, lurking under the cliff on which the Castle was built ; and made him farther sensible, that he

was to have access to it by a ladder of considerable height placed at the window of the ruin.

Julian was both displeased and alarmed by the security and carelessness of the sentinels, who had suffered such preparations to be made without observation or alarm given ; and he hesitated whether he should not call the officer of the guard, upbraid him with negligence, and shew him how easily Holm-Peel, in spite of its natural strength, and although reported impregnable, might be surprised by a few resolute men. Fenella seemed to guess his thoughts with that extreme acuteness of observation which her deprivations had occasioned her acquiring. She laid one hand on his arm, and a finger of the other on her own lips, as if to enjoin forbearance ; and Julian, knowing that she acted by the direct authority of the Countess, obeyed her accordingly ; but with the internal resolution to lose no time in communicating his sentiments to the Earl, concerning the danger to which the Castle was exposed on this point.

In the meantime, he descended the ladder with some precaution, for the steps were unequal, broken, wet, and slippery ; and having placed himself in the stern of the boat, made a signal to the men to push off, and turned to take farewell of his guide. To his utter astonishment, Fenella rather slid down, than descended regularly, the perilous ladder, and, the boat being already pushed off, made a spring

from the last step of it with incredible agility, and seated herself beside Peveril, ere he could express either remonstrance or surprise. He commanded the men once more to pull in to the precarious landing-place; and throwing into his countenance a part of the displeasure which he really felt, endeavoured to make her comprehend the necessity of returning to her mistress. Fenella folded her arms, and looked at him with a haughty smile, which completely expressed the determination of her purpose. Peveril was extremely embarrassed; he was afraid of offending the Countess, and interfering with her plan, by giving alarm, which otherwise he was much tempted to have done. On Fenella, it was evident, no species of argument which he could employ was like to make the least impression; and the question remained, how, if she went on with him, he was to rid himself of so singular and inconvenient a companion, and provide, at the same time, sufficiently for her personal security.

The boatmen brought the matter to a decision; for, after lying on their oars for a minute, and whispering among themselves in Low Dutch or German, they began to pull stoutly, and were soon at some distance from the Castle. The possibility of the sentinels sending a musket-ball, or even a cannon-shot, after them, was one of the contingencies which gave Peveril momentary anxiety; but they left the fortress, as they must have approach-

ed it, unnoticed, or at least unchallenged—a carelessness on the part of the garrison, which, notwithstanding that the oars were muffled, and that the men spoke little, and in whispers, argued, in Peveril's opinion, great negligence on the part of the sentinels. When they were a little way from the Castle, the men began to row briskly towards a small vessel which lay at some distance. Peveril had, in the meantime, leisure to remark, that the boatmen spoke to each other doubtfully, and bent anxious looks on Fenella, as if doubtful whether they had acted properly in bringing her off.

After about a quarter of an hour's rowing, they reached the little sloop, where Peveril was received by the skipper, or captain, on the quarter-deck, with offer of spirits or refreshment. A word or two among the seamen withdrew the captain from his hospitable cares, and he flew to the ship's side, apparently to prevent Fenella from entering the vessel. The men and he talked eagerly in Dutch, looking anxiously at Fenella as they spoke together; and Peveril hoped the result would be, that the poor young woman should be sent ashore again. But she baffled whatever opposition could be opposed to her; and when the accommodation-ladder, as it is called, was withdrawn, she snatched the end of a rope, and climbed on board with the dexterity of a sailor, leaving them no means of preventing her entrance, save by actual violence, to which appa-

rently they did not choose to have recourse. Once on deck, she took the captain by the sleeve, and led him to the head of the vessel, where they seemed to hold intercourse in a manner intelligible to both.

Peveril soon forgot the presence of the mute, as he began to muse upon his own situation, and the probability that he was separated for some considerable time from the object of his affections. "Constancy," he repeated to himself,—“Constancy.” And, as if in coincidence with the theme of his reflections, he fixed his eyes on the polar star, which that night twinkled with more than ordinary brilliancy. Emblem of pure passion and steady purpose—the thoughts which arose as he viewed its clear and unchanging light, were disinterested and noble. To seek his country's welfare, and secure the blessings of domestic peace—to discharge a bold and perilous duty to his friend and patron—to regard his passion for Alice Bridgenorth, as the load-star which was to guide him to noble deeds—were the resolutions which thronged upon his mind, and which exalted his spirits to that state of romantic melancholy, which perhaps is ill exchanged even for feelings of joyful rapture.

He was recalled from these contemplations by something which nestled itself softly and closely to his side—a woman's sigh sounded so near him, as to disturb his reverie; and as he turned his head, he saw Fenella seated beside him, with her eyes fixed

on the same star which had just occupied his own. His first emotion was that of displeasure; but it was impossible to persevere in it towards a being so helpless in many respects, so interesting in others; whose large dark eyes were filled with dew, which glistened in the moon-light; and the source of whose emotions seemed to be in a partiality which might well claim indulgence, at least from him, who was the object of it. At the same time, Julian resolved to seize the present opportunity, for such expostulations with Fenella on the strangeness of her conduct, as the poor maiden might be able to comprehend. He took her hand with great kindness, but at the same time with much gravity, pointed to the boat, and to the Castle, whose towers and extended walls were now scarce visible in the distance; and thus intimated to her the necessity of her return to Holm-Peel. She looked down, and shook her head, as if negating his proposal with obstinate decision. Julian renewed his expostulation by look and gesture—pointed to his own heart, to intimate the Countess—and bent his brows, to shew the displeasure which she must entertain. To all which, the maiden only answered by her tears.

At length, as if driven to explanation by his continued remonstrances, she suddenly seized him by the arm, to arrest his attention—cast her eye hastily around, as if to see whether she was watch-

ed by any one—then drew the other hand, edgewise, across her slender throat—pointed to the boat, and to the Castle, and nodded.

On this series of signs, Peveril could put no interpretation, excepting that he was menaced with some personal danger, from which Fenella seemed to conceive that her presence was a protection. Whatever was her meaning, her purpose seemed unalterably adopted ; at least, it was plain he had no power to shake it. He must therefore wait till the end of their short voyage, to disembarass himself of his companion ; and, in the meanwhile, acting on the idea of her having harboured a misplaced attachment to him, he thought he should best consult her interest, and his own character, in keeping at as great a distance from her as circumstances admitted. With this purpose, he made the sign she used for going to sleep, by leaning his head on his palm ; and having thus recommended to her to go to rest, he himself desired to be conducted to his birth.

The captain readily shewed him a hammock in the after-cabin, into which he threw himself, to seek that repose which the exercise and agitation of the preceding day, as well as the lateness of the hour, made him now feel desirable. Sleep, deep and heavy, sunk down on him in a few minutes, but it did not endure long. In his sleep he was disturbed by female cries ; and at length, as he

thought, distinctly heard the voice of Alice Bridgenorth call on his name.

He awoke, and, starting up to quit his bed, became sensible, from the motion of the vessel, and the swinging of the hammock, that his dream had deceived him. He was still startled by its extreme vivacity and liveliness. “ Julian Peveril, help ! Julian Peveril ! ” The sounds still rung in his ears—the accents were those of Alice—and he could scarce persuade himself that his imagination had deceived him. Could she be in the same vessel ? The thought was not altogether inconsistent with her father’s character, and the intrigues in which he was engaged ; but then, if so, to what peril was she exposed, that she invoked his name so loudly ?

Determined to make instant inquiry, he jumped out of his hammock, half-dressed as he was, and stumbling about the little cabin, which was as dark as pitch, at length, with considerable difficulty, reached the door. The door, however, he was altogether unable to open ; and was obliged to call loudly to the watch upon deck. The skipper, or captain, as he was called, being the only person aboard who could speak English, answered to the summons, and replied to Peveril’s demand, what noise that was ?—that a boat was going off with the young woman—that she whimpered a little as she left the vessel—and “ dat vaas ah.”

This explanation satisfied Julian, who thought it probable that some degree of violence might have been absolutely necessary to remove Fenella ; and although he rejoiced not to have witnessed it, he could not feel sorry that such had been employed. Her pertinacious desire to continue on board, and the difficulty of freeing himself when he should come ashore from so singular a companion, had given him a good deal of anxiety on the preceding night, which he now saw removed by this bold stroke of the captain.

His dream was thus fully explained. Fancy had caught up the inarticulate and vehement cries with which Fenella was wont to express resistance or displeasure—had coined them into language, and given them the accents of Alice Bridgenorth. Our imagination plays wilder tricks with us almost every night.

The captain now undid the door, and appeared with a lantern ; without the aid of which, Peveril could scarce have regained his couch, where he now slumbered secure and sound, until day was far advanced, and the invitation of the captain called him up to breakfast.

CHAP. II.

Now, what is this that haunts me like my shadow,
Frisking and mumming like an elf in moonlight?

BEN JONSON.

PEVERIL found the master of the vessel rather less rude than those in his station of life usually are, and received from him full satisfaction concerning the fate of Fenella, upon whom the captain bestowed a hearty curse, for obliging him to lay-to until he had sent his boat ashore, and had her back again.

“I hope,” said Peveril, “no violence was necessary to reconcile her to go ashore? I trust she offered no foolish resistance?”

“Resist! mein Gott,” said the captain, “she did resist like a troop of horse—she did cry, you might hear her at Whitehaven—she did go up the rigging like a cat up a chimney; but dat was ein trick of her old trade.”

“What trade do you mean?” said Peveril.

“O,” said the seaman, “I vas know more about her than you, Meinheer. I vas know that she was

a little, very little girl, and prentice to one seiltanzer, when my lady yonder had the good luck to buy her."

"A seiltanzer," said Peveril; "what do you mean by that?"

"I mean a rope-danzer, a mountebank, a Hans pickel-harring. I vas know Adrian Brackel vell—he sell de powders dat empty men's stomach, and fill him's own purse. Not know Adrian Brackel, mein Gott! I have smoked many a pound of tabak with him."

Peveril now remembered that Fenella had been brought into the family when he and the young Earl were in England, and while the Countess was absent on an expedition to the continent. Where the Countess found her, she never communicated to the young men; but only intimated, that she had received her out of compassion, in order to relieve her from a situation of extreme distress.

He hinted so much to the communicative seaman, who replied, "that for distress he knew nochts on't; only, that Adrian Brackel beat her when she would not dance on the rope, and starved her when she did, to prevent her growth. The bargain between the Countess and the mountebank, he said, he had made himself; because the Countess had hired his brig upon her expedition to the continent. None else knew where she came from. The Countess had seen her on a public stage at

Ostend—compassionated her helpless situation, and the severe treatment she received—and had employed him to purchase the poor creature from her master, and charged him with silence towards all her retinue.—And so I do keep silence,” continued the faithful confidant, “van I am in the havens of Man ; but when I am on the broad seas, den my tongue is mine own, you know. Die foolish beoples in the island, they say she is a *wechsel-balg*—what you call a fairy-elf changeling. My faith, they do not never have seen ein *wechsel-balg* ; for I saw one myself at Cologne, and it was twice as big as yonder girl, and did break the poor people, with eating them up, like de great big cuckoo in the sparrow’s nest ; but this Venella eat no more than other girls—it was no *wechsel-balg* in the world.”

By a different train of reasoning, Julian had arrived at the same conclusion ; in which, therefore, he heartily acquiesced. During the seaman’s prosing, he was reflecting within himself, how much of the singular flexibility of her limbs and movements the unfortunate girl must have derived from the discipline and instructions of Adrian Brackel ; and also how far the germs of her wilful and capricious passions might have been sown during her wandering and adventurous childhood. Aristocratic, also, as his education had been, these anecdotes respecting Fenella’s original situation

and education, rather increased his pleasure at having shaken off her company ; and yet he still felt desirous to know any farther particulars which the seaman could communicate on the same subject. But he had already told all he knew. Of her parents he knew nothing, except that “ her father must have been a damned hundsfoot, and a schelm, for selling his own flesh and blood to Adrian Brackel ;” for by such a transaction, had the mountebank become possessed of his pupil.

This conversation tended to remove any passing doubts which might have crept on Peveril’s mind concerning the fidelity of the master of the vessel, who appeared from thence to have been a former acquaintance of the Countess, and to have enjoyed some share of her confidence. The threatening motion used by Fenella, he no longer considered as worthy of any notice, excepting as a new mark of the irritability of her temper.

He amused himself with walking the deck, and musing on his past and future prospects, until his attention was forcibly arrested by the wind, which began to rise in gusts from the north-west, in a manner so unfavourable to the course they intended to hold, that the master, after many efforts to beat against it, declared his bark, which was by no means an excellent sea-boat, was unequal to making Whitehaven ; and that he was compelled to make a fair wind of it, and run for Liverpool. To

this course, Peveril did not object. It saved him some land journey, in case he visited his father's castle ; and the Countess's commission would be discharged as effectually the one way as the other.

The vessel was put, accordingly, before the wind, and ran with great steadiness and velocity. The captain, notwithstanding, pleading some nautical hazards, chose to lay off, and did not attempt the mouth of the Mersey until morning, when Peveril had at length the satisfaction of being landed upon the quay of Liverpool, which even then shewed symptoms of the commercial prosperity that has since been carried to such a height.

The master, who was well acquainted with the port, pointed out to Julian a decent place of entertainment, chiefly frequented by sea-faring people ; for, although he had been in the town formerly, he did not think it proper to go anywhere at present where he might have been unnecessarily recognized. Here he took leave of the seaman, after pressing upon him with difficulty a small present for his crew. As for his passage, the captain declined any recompence whatsoever ; and they parted upon the most civil terms.

The inn to which he was recommended was full of strangers, seamen, and mercantile people, all intent upon their own affairs, and discussing them with noise and eagerness, peculiar to the business of a thriving sea-port. But although the general

clamour of the public room, in which the guests mixed with each other, related chiefly to their own commercial dealings, there was a general theme mingling with them, which was alike common and interesting to all ; so that, amidst disputes about freight, tonnage, demurrage, and such like, were heard the emphatic sounds of “ Deep, damnable, accursed plot,”—“ Bloody Papist villains,”—“ The King in danger—the gallows too good for them,” and so forth.

The fermentation excited in London had plainly reached even this remote sea-port, and was received by the inhabitants with the peculiar stormy energy which invests men in their situation with the character of the winds and waves with which they are chiefly conversant. The commercial and nautical interests of England were indeed particularly anti-catholic ; although it is not, perhaps, easy to give any distinct reason why they should be so, since theological disputes in general could scarce be considered as interesting to them. But zeal, amongst the lower orders at least, is often in an inverse ratio to knowledge ; and sailors were not probably the less earnest and devoted Protestants, that they did not understand the controversy between the churches. As for the merchants, they were almost necessarily inimical to the gentry of Lancashire and Cheshire ; many of whom still retained the faith of Rome, which was rendered ten

times more odious to the men of commerce, as the badge of their haughty aristocratic neighbours.

From the little which Peveril heard of the sentiments of the people of Liverpool, he imagined he should act most prudently in leaving the place as soon as possible, and before any suspicion should arise of his having any connection with the party which appeared to have become so obnoxious.

In order to accomplish his journey, it was first necessary that he should purchase a horse ; and for this purpose he resolved to have recourse to the stables of a dealer well known at the time, and who dwelt in the outskirts of the place ; and having obtained directions to his dwelling, he went thither to provide himself.

Joe Bridlesley's stables exhibited a large choice of good horses ; for that trade was formerly more generally active than at present. It was an ordinary thing for a stranger to buy a horse for the purpose of a single journey, and to sell him, as well as he could, when he had reached the point of his destination ; and hence there was a constant demand, and a corresponding supply ; upon both of which, Bridlesley, and those of his trade, contrived, doubtless, to make handsome profits.

Julian, who was no despicable horse-jockey, selected for his purpose a strong, well-made horse, about sixteen hands high, and had him led into the yard, to see whether his paces corresponded

with his appearance. As these also gave perfect satisfaction to the customer, it remained only to settle the price with Bridlesley ; who of course swore his customer had pitched upon the best horse ever darkened the stable-door, since he had dealt that way ; that no such horses were to be had now-a-days, for that the mares were dead that foaled them ; and having named a corresponding price, the usual haggling commenced betwixt the seller and purchaser, for adjustment of what the French dealers call *le prix juste*.

The reader, if he is at all acquainted with this sort of traffic, well knows it is generally a keen encounter of wits, and attracts the notice of all the idlers within hearing, who are usually very ready to offer their opinions, or their evidence. Amongst these, upon the present occasion, was a thin man, rather less than the ordinary size, and meanly dressed ; but whose interference was in a confident tone, and such as shewed himself master of the subject on which he spoke. The price of the horse being settled to about fifteen pounds, which was very high for the period, that of the saddle and bridle had next to be adjusted, and the thin mean-looking person before-mentioned, found nearly as much to say on this subject as on the other. As his remarks had a conciliating and obliging tendency towards the stranger, Peveril concluded he was one of those idle persons, who, unable or un-

willing to supply themselves with means of indulgence at their own cost, are not unwilling to deserve them at the hands of others, by a little officious complaisance ; and considering that he might acquire some useful information from such a person, was just about to offer him the courtesy of a morning draught, when he observed he had suddenly left the yard. He had scarce remarked this circumstance, before a party of customers entered the place, whose haughty assumption of importance claimed the instant attention of Bridlesley, and all his militia of grooms and stable-boys.

“ Three good horses,” said the leader of the party, a tall bulky man, whose breath was drawn full and high, under a consciousness of fat, and of importance—“ three good and able-bodied horses, for the service of the Commons of England.”

Bridlesley said he had some horses which might serve the Speaker himself at need ; but that, to speak Christian truth, he had just sold the best in his stable to that gentleman present, who, doubtless, would give up the bargain if the horse was needed for the service of the state.

“ You speak well, friend,” said the important personage ; and advancing to Julian, demanded, in a very haughty tone, the surrender of the purchase which he had just made.

Peveril, with some difficulty, subdued the strong desire which he felt to return a round refusal to

so unreasonable a request, but fortunately, recollecting that the situation in which he at present stood, required, on his part, much circumspection, he replied simply, that upon shewing him any warrant to seize upon horses for the public service, he must of course submit to resign his purchase.

The man, with an air of extreme dignity, pulled from his pocket, and thrust into Peveril's hands, a warrant; subscribed by the Speaker of the House of Commons, empowering Charles Topham, their officer of the Black Rod, to pursue and seize upon the persons of certain individuals named in the warrant; and of all other persons who are, or should be, accused by competent witnesses, of being accessory to, or favourers of, the hellish and damnable Popish Plot, at present carried on within the bowels of the kingdom; and charging all men, as they loved their allegiance, to render the said Charles Topham their readiest and most effective assistance, in execution of the duty intrusted to his care."

On perusing a document of such weighty import, Julian had no hesitation to give up his horse to this formidable functionary; whom somebody compared to a lion, which, as the House of Commons was pleased to maintain such an animal, they were under the necessity of providing for by frequent commitments; until "*Take him, Topham,*"

became a proverb, and a formidable one, in the mouth of the public.

The acquiescence of Peveril procured him some grace in the sight of the emissary; who, before selecting two horses for his attendants, gave permission to the stranger to purchase a gray horse, much inferior, indeed, to that which he had resigned, both in form and in action, but very little lower in price, as Mr Bridlesley, immediately on learning the demand for horses upon the part of the Commons of England, had passed a private resolution in his own mind, augmenting the price of his whole stud, by an imposition of at least twenty per cent, *ad valorem*.

Peveril adjusted and paid the price with much less argument than on the former occasion; for, to be plain with the reader, he had noticed in the warrant of Mr Topham, the name of his father, Sir Geoffrey Peveril of Martindale Castle, engrossed at full length, as one of those subjected to arrest by that officer.

When aware of this material fact, it became Julian's business to leave Liverpool directly, and carry the alarm to Derbyshire, if, indeed, Mr Topham had not already executed his charge in that country, which he thought unlikely, as it was probable they would commence by securing those who lived nearest to the sea-ports. A word or two which he overheard, strengthened his hopes.

“And hark ye, friend,” said Mr Topham ; “you will have the horses at the door of Mr Shortell, the mercer, in two hours, as we shall refresh ourselves there with a cool tankard, and learn what folks live in the neighbourhood that may be concerned in my way. And you will please to have that saddle padded, for I am told the Derbyshire roads are rough.—And you, Captain Dangerfield, and Master Everett, you must put on your Protestant spectacles, and shew me where there is the shadow of a priest, or of a priest’s favourer ; for I am come down with a broom in my cap to sweep this north country of such like cattle.”

One of the persons he thus addressed, who wore the garb of a broken-down citizen, only answered, “Ay, truly, Master Topham, it is time to purge the garner.”

The other, who had a formidable pair of whiskers, a red nose, and a tarnished laced coat, together with a hat of Pistol’s dimensions, was more loquacious. “I take it on my damnation,” said this zealous Protestant witness, “that I will discover the marks of the beast on every one of them betwixt sixteen and seventy, as plainly as if they had crossed themselves with ink, instead of holy water. Since we have a King willing to do justice, and a House of Commons to uphold prosecutions, why, damn me, the cause must not stand still for lack of evidence.”

“ Stick to that, noble captain,” answered the officer ; “ but, prithee, reserve thy oaths for the court of justice ; it is but sheer waste to throw them away, as you do, in your ordinary conversation.”

“ Fear you nothing, Master Topham,” answered Dangerfield ; “ it is right to keep a man’s gifts in use ; and were I altogether to renounce oaths in my private discourse, how should I know how to use one when I needed it ? But you hear me use none of your Papist abjurations. I swear not by the Mass, or before George, or by anything that belongs to idolatry ; but such downright oaths as may serve a poor Protestant gentleman, who would fain serve Heaven and the King.”

“ Bravely spoken, most noble Festus,” said his yoke-fellow. “ But do not suppose, that although I do not use to garnish my words with oaths out of season, I will be wanting, when called upon, to declare the height and the depth, the width and the length, of this hellish plot against the King and the Protestant faith.”

Dizzy, and almost sick, with listening to the undisguised brutality of these fellows, Peveril having with difficulty prevailed on Bridlesley to settle his purchase, at length led forth his gray steed ; but was scarce out of the yard, when he heard the following alarming conversation pass, of which he seemed himself the object.

“ Who is that youth ?” said the slow soft voice of the more precise of the two witnesses. “ Methinks I have seen him somewhere before. Is he from these parts ?”

“ Not that I know of,” said Bridlesley ; who, like all the other inhabitants of England at the time, answered the interrogatories of these fellows with the deference which is paid in Spain to the questions of an inquisitor. “ A stranger—entirely a stranger—never saw him before—a wild young colt, I warrant him ; and knows a horse’s mouth as well as I do.”

“ I begin to bethink me I saw such a face as his at the Jesuit’s consult, in the White Horse Tavern,” answered Everett.

“ And I think I recollect,” said Captain Dangerfield——

“ Come, come, master and captain,” said the authoritative voice of Topham, “ we will have none of your recollections at present. We all know what these are likely to end in. But I will have you know, you are not to run till the leash is slipped. The young man is a well-looking lad, and gave up his horse handsomely for the service of the House of Commons. He knows how to behave himself to his betters, I warrant you ; and I scarce think he has enough in his purse to pay the fees.”

This speech concluded the dialogue, which Peveril, finding himself so much concerned in the is-

sue, thought it best to hear to an end. Now when it ceased, to get out of the town unobserved, and take the nearest way to his father's castle, seemed his wisest plan. He had settled his reckoning at the inn, and brought with him to Bridlesley's the small portmanteau which contained his few necessities, so that he had no occasion to return thither. He resolved, therefore, to ride some miles before he stopped, even for the purpose of feeding his horse ; and being pretty well acquainted with the country, he hoped to be able to push forward to Martindale Castle sooner than the worshipful Master Topham ; whose saddle was, in the first place, to be padded, and who, when mounted, would, in all probability, ride with the precaution of those who require such security against the effects of a hard trot.

Under the influence of these feelings, Julian pushed for Warrington, a place with which he was well acquainted ; but without halting in the town, he crossed the Mersey, by the bridge built by an ancestor of his friend the Earl of Derby, and continued his rout towards Dishley, on the borders of Derbyshire. He might have reached this latter village easily, had his horse been fitter for a forced march ; but in the course of the journey, he had occasion, more than once, to curse the official dignity of the person who had robbed him of his better horse, while taking the best direction he could

through a country with which he was only generally acquainted.

At length, near Altringham, a halt became unavoidable ; and Peveril had only to look for some quiet and sequestered place of refreshment. This presented itself, in the form of a small cluster of cottages ; the best of which united the characters of an alehouse and a mill, where the sign of the Cat, (the landlord's faithful ally in defence of his meal-sacks,) booted as high as Grimalkin in the fairy tale, and playing on the fiddle for the more grace, announced that John Whitecraft united the two honest occupations of landlord and miller ; and, doubtless, took toll from the public in both capacities.

Such a place promised a traveller, who journeyed incognito, more safe, if not better accommodation, than he was like to meet with in more frequented inns ; and at the door of the Cat and Fiddle, Julian halted accordingly.

CHAP. III.

In these distracted times, when each man dreads
The bloody stratagems of busy heads.

OTWAY.

AT the door of the Cat and Fiddle, Julian received the usual attention paid to the customers of an inferior house of entertainment. His horse was carried by a ragged lad, who acted as hostler, into a paltry stable ; where, however, it was tolerably supplied with food and litter.

Having seen the animal on which his comfort, perhaps his safety, depended, properly provided for, Peveril entered the kitchen, which indeed was also the parlour and hall of the little hostelry, to try what refreshment he could obtain for himself. Much to his satisfaction, he found there was only one guest in the kitchen besides himself ; but he was less pleased when he found that he must either go without dinner, or share with that single guest the only provisions which chanced to be in the house, namely, a dish of trouts and eels, which their host, the miller, had brought in from his mill-stream.

At the particular request of Julian, the landlady undertook to add a substantial dish of eggs and bacon, which perhaps she would not have undertaken for, had not the sharp eye of Peveril discovered the flitch hanging in its smoky retreat, when, as its presence could not be denied, the hostess was compelled to bring it forward as a part of her supplies.

She was a buxom dame, about thirty, whose comely and cheerful countenance did honour to the choice of the jolly miller, her loving mate ; and was now stationed under the shade of an old-fashioned huge projecting chimney, within which it was her province to “ work i’ the fire,” and provide for the wearied wayfaring man, the good things which were to send him rejoicing on his way. Although, at first, the honest woman seemed little disposed to give herself much additional trouble on Julian’s account, yet the good looks, handsome figure, and easy civility of her new guest, soon bespoke the principal part of her attention ; and while busy in his service, she regarded him, from time to time, with looks, where something like pity mingled with complacency. The rich smoke of the rasher, and the eggs with which it was flanked, already spread itself through the apartment ; and the hissing of these savoury viands bore chorus to the simmering of the pan, in which the fish were undergoing a slower decoction. The

table was covered with a clean huck-a-buck napkin, and all was in preparation for the meal, which Julian began to expect with a good deal of impatience, when the companion who was destined to share it with him, entered the apartment.

At the first glance, Julian recognized, to his surprise, the same indifferently-dressed, thin-looking person, who, during the first bargain which he had made with Bridlesley, had officiously interfered with his advice and opinion. Displeased at having the company of any stranger forced upon him, Peveril was still less satisfied to find one who might make some claim of acquaintance with him, however slender, since the circumstances in which he stood compelled him to be as reserved as possible. He therefore turned his back upon his destined messmate, and pretended to amuse himself by looking out of the window, determined to avoid all intercourse until it should be inevitably forced upon him.

In the meanwhile, the other stranger went straight up to the landlady, where she toiled on household cares intent, and demanded of her, what she meant by preparing bacon and eggs, when he had positively charged her to get nothing ready but the fish.

The good woman, important as every cook in the discharge of her duty, deigned not for some time so much as to acknowledge that she heard

the reproof of her guest ; and when she did so, it was only to repel it in a magisterial and authoritative tone.—“ If he did not like bacon—(bacon from their own hitch, well fed on pease and bran)—if he did not like bacon and eggs—(new-laid eggs, which she had brought in from the hen-roost with her own hands)—why so put case—it was the worse for his honour, and the better for those who did.”

“ The better for those who like them ? ” answered the guest ; “ that is as much as to say I am to have a companion, good woman.”

“ Do not good woman me, sir,” replied the miller’s wife, “ till I call you good man ; and, I promise you, many would scruple to do that to one who does not love eggs and bacon of a Friday.”

“ Nay, my good lady,” said her guest, “ do not fix any misconstruction upon me—I dare say the eggs and the bacon are excellent ; only, they are rather a dish too heavy for my stomach.”

“ Ay, or your conscience perhaps, sir,” answered the hostess. “ And now, I bethink me, you must needs have your fish fried with oil, instead of the good drippings I was going to put to them. I would I could spell the meaning of all this now ; but I warrant John Bigstaff, the constable, could conjure something out of it.”

There was a pause here ; but Julian, somewhat alarmed at the tone which the conversation assu-

med, became interested in watching the dumb show which succeeded. By bringing his head a little towards the left, but without turning round, or quitting the projecting latticed window where he had taken his station, he could observe that the stranger, secured, as he seemed to think himself, from observation, had sidled close up to the landlady ; and, as he conceived, had put a piece of money into her hand. The altered tone of the miller's moiety corresponded very much with this supposition.

“ Nay, indeed, and forsooth,” she said, “ her house was Liberty-hall ; and so should every publican's be. What was it to her what gentlefolks ate or drank, providing they paid for it honestly ? There were many honest gentlemen, whose stomachs could not abide bacon, grease, or dripping, especially on a Friday ; and what was that to her, or any one in her line, so gentle-folks paid honestly for the trouble ? Only, she would say, that her bacon and eggs could not be mended betwixt this and Liverpool ; and that she would live and die upon.”

“ I shall hardly dispute it,” said the stranger ; and turning towards Julian, he added, “ I wish this gentleman, who I suppose is my trencher-companion, much joy of the dainties which I cannot assist him in consuming.”

“ I assure you, sir,” answered Peveril, who now

felt himself compelled to turn about, and reply with civility, "that it was with difficulty I could prevail on my landlady to add my cover to yours, though she seems now such a zealot for the consumption of eggs and bacon."

"I am zealous for nothing," said the landlady, "save that men would eat their victuals, and pay their score; and if there be enough in one dish to serve two guests, I see little purpose in dressing them two; however, they are ready now, and done to a nicety.—Here, Alice! Alice!"

The sound of that well-known name made Julian start; but the Alice who replied to the call ill resembled the vision which his imagination connected with the accents, being a dowdy slipshod wench, the drudge of the low inn which afforded him shelter. She assisted her mistress in putting on the table the dishes which the latter had prepared; and a foaming jug of home-brewed ale being placed betwixt them, was warranted by Dame Whitecraft as excellent; "for," said she, "we know by practice that too much water drowns the miller, and we spare it on our malt as we would in our mill-dam."

"I drink to your health in it, dame," said the elder stranger; "and a cup of thanks for these excellent fish; and to the drowning of all unkindness between us."

"I thank you, sir," said the dame, "and wish

you the like ; but I dare not pledge you, for our Gaffer says, the ale is brewed too strong for women ; so I only drink a glass of canary at a time with a gossip, or any gentleman guest that is so minded."

" You shall drink one with me then, dame," said Peveril, " so you will let me have a flagon."

" That you shall, sir, and as good as ever was broached ; but I must to the mill, to get the key from the goodman."

So saying, and tucking her clean gown through the pocket-holes, that her steps might be the more alert, and her dress escape dust, off she tripped to the mill, which lay close adjoining.

" A dainty dame, and dangerous, is the miller's wife," said the stranger, looking at Peveril. " Is not that old Chaucer's phrase ?"

" I—I believe so," said Peveril, not much read in Chaucer, who was then even more neglected than at present ; and much surprised at a literary quotation from one of the mean appearance exhibited by the person before him.

" Yes," answered the stranger, " I see that you, like other young gentlemen of the time, are better acquainted with Cowley and Waller, than with the ' well of English undefiled.' I cannot help differing. There are touches of nature about the old bard of Woodstock, that, to me, are worth all the turns of laborious wit in Cowley, and all the

ornate and artificial simplicity of his courtly competitor. The description, for instance, of his country coquette,—

‘ Wincing she was, as is a wanton colt,
Sweet as a flower, and upright as a bolt.’

Then again, for pathos, where will you mend the dying scene of Arcite ?

‘ Alas, my heartis queen ! alas, my wife !
Giver at once, and ender of my life.
What is this world ?—What axen men to have ?
Now with his love—now in his cold grave
Alone, withouten other company.’

But I tire you, sir ; and do injustice to the poet, whom I remember but by halves.”

“ On the contrary, sir,” replied Peveril, “ you make him more intelligible to me in your recitation, than I have found him when I have tried to peruse him myself.”

“ You were only frightened by the antiquated spelling, and ‘ the letters black,’ ” said his companion. “ It is many a scholar’s case, who mistakes a nut, which he could crack with a little exertion, for a bullet, which he must needs break his teeth on ; but yours are better employed.—Shall I offer you some of this fish ?”

“ Not so, sir,” replied Julian, willing to shew himself a man of reading in his turn ; “ I hold

with old Caius, and profess a fine judgment, to fight where I cannot choose, and to eat no fish."

The stranger cast a startled look around him at this observation, which Julian had thrown out, on purpose to ascertain, if possible, the quality of his companion, whose present language was so different from the character he had assumed at Bridlesley's. His countenance, too, although the features were of an ordinary, not to say mean cast, had that character of intelligence which education gives to the most homely face; and his manners were so easy and disembarrassed, as plainly shewed a complete acquaintance with society, as well as the habit of mingling with it in the higher stages. The alarm which he had evidently shewn at Peveril's answer, was but momentary; for he almost instantly replied, with a smile, "I promise you, sir, that you are in no dangerous company; for, notwithstanding my fish dinner, I am much disposed to trifle with some of your savoury mess, if you will indulge me so far."

Peveril accordingly reinforced the stranger's trencher with what remained of the bacon and eggs, and saw him swallow a mouthful or two with apparent relish; but presently after, began to dally with his knife and fork, like one whose appetite was satiated; then took a long draught of the black jack, and handed his platter to the large mastiff dog, who, attracted by the smell of the

dinner, had sat down before him for some time, licking his chops, and following with his eye every morsel which the guest raised to his head.

“ Here, my poor fellow,” said he, “ thou hast had no fish, and needest this supernumerary trencher-load more than I do. I cannot withstand thy mute supplication any longer.”

The dog answered these courtesies by a civil shake of the tail, while he gobbled up what was assigned him by the stranger’s benevolence, in the greater haste, that he heard his mistress’s voice at the door.

“ Here is the canary, gentlemen,” said the landlady ; “ and the goodman has set off the mill, to come to wait on you himself. He always does so, when company drink wine.”

“ That he may come in for the host’s, that is, for the lion’s share,” said the stranger, looking at Peveril.

“ The shot is mine,” said Julian ; “ and if mine host will share it, I will willingly bestow another quart on him, and on you, sir. I never break old customs.”

These sounds caught the ear of Gaffer Whitecraft, who had entered the room, a strapping specimen of his robust trade, prepared to play the civil, or the surly host, as his company should be acceptable or otherwise. At Julian’s invitation, he doffed his dusty bonnet—brushed from his

sleeve the looser particles of his professional dust—and sitting down on the end of a bench, about a yard from the table, filled a glass of canary, and drank to his guests, and “especially to this noble gentleman,” indicating Peveril, who had ordered the canary.

Julian returned the courtesy by drinking his health, and asking what news were about in the country.

“Nought, sir, I hears on nought, except this Plot, as they call it, that they are pursuing the Papishers about; but it brings water to my mill, as the saying is. Between expresses hurrying hither and thither, and guards and prisoners riding to and again, and the custom of the neighbours, that come to speak over the news of an evening, nightly I may say, instead of once a-week, why the spiggot is in use, gentlemen, and your landlord thrives; and then I, serving as constable, and being a known Protestant, I have tapped, I may venture to say, it may be ten stands of ale extraordinary, besides a reasonable sale of wine for a country corner. Heaven make us thankful, and keep all good Protestants from Plot and Popery!”

“I can easily conceive, my friend,” said Julian, “that curiosity is a passion which runs naturally to the alehouse; and that anger, and jealousy, and fear, are all of them thirsty passions, and great consumers of home-brewed. But I am a perfect

stranger in these parts ; and I would willingly learn, from a sensible man like you, a little of this same Plot, of which men speak so much, and appear to know so little."

" Learn a little of it ?—Why, it is the most horrible—the most damnable, bloody-thirsty beast of a Plot—But hold, hold, my good master ; I hope, in the first place, you believe there is a Plot ? for, otherwise, the Justice must have a word with you, so sure as my name is John Whitecraft."

" It shall not need," said Peveril ; " for I assure you, mine host, I believe in the Plot as freely and fully as a man can believe in anything he cannot understand."

" God forbid that anybody should pretend to understand it," said the implicit constable ; " for his worship the Justice says it is a mile beyond him ; and he be as deep as most of them. But men may believe, though they do not understand ; and that is what the Romanists say themselves. But this I am sure of, it makes a rare stirring time for justices, and witnesses, and constables.—So here's to your health again, gentlemen, in a cup of neat canary."

" Come, come, John Whitecraft," said his wife, " do not you demean yourself by naming witnesses along with justices and constables. All the world knows how they come by their money."

" Ay, but all the world knows that they *do* come

by it, dame ; and that is a great comfort. They rustle in their canonical silks, and swagger in their buff and scarlet, who but they ?—Ay, ay, the cursed fox thrives—and not so cursed neither. Is there not Doctor Titus Oates, the saviour of the nation—does he not live at Whitehall, and eat off plate, and have a pension of thousands a-year, for what I know ? and is he not to be Bishop of Litchfield, so soon as Dr Doddrum dies ?”

“ Then I hope Doctor Doddrum’s reverence will live these twenty years ; and I dare say I am the first that ever wished such a wish,” said the hostess. “ I do not understand these doings, not I ; and if a hundred Jesuits came to hold a consult at my house, as they did at the White Horse Tavern, I should think it quite out of the line of business to bear witness against them, provided they drank well, and paid their score.”

“ Very true, dame,” said her elder guest ; “ that is what I call keeping a good publican conscience ; and so I will pay score presently, and be jogging on my way.”

Peveril, on his part, also demanded a reckoning, and discharged it so liberally, that the miller flourished his hat as he bowed, and the hostess curtsied down to the ground.

The horses of both guests were brought forth ; and they mounted, in order to depart in company. The host and hostess stood in the door, to see them

depart. The landlord proffered a stirrup-cup to the elder guest, while the landlady offered Peveril a glass from her own peculiar bottle. For this purpose, she mounted on the horse-block, with flask and glass in hand ; so that it was easy for the departing guest, although on horseback, to return the courtesy in the most approved manner, namely, by throwing his arm over his landlady's shoulder, and saluting her at parting.

Dame Whitecraft could not decline this familiarity ; for there is no room for traversing upon a horse-block, and the hands which might have served her for resistance, were occupied with glass and bottle—matters too precious to be thrown away in such a struggle. Apparently, however, she had something else in her head ; for, as, after a brief affectation of reluctance, she permitted Peveril's face to approach hers, she whispered in his ear, "Beware of trapans!"—an awful intimation, which, in those days of distrust, suspicion, and treachery, was as effectual in interdicting free and social intercourse, as the advertisement of "man-traps and spring-guns," to protect an orchard. Pressing her hand, in intimation that he comprehended her hint, she shook his warmly in return, and bade God speed him. There was a cloud on John Whitecraft's brow ; nor did his final farewell sound half so cordial as that which had been spoken within doors. But then Peveril reflected, that the same

guest is not always equally acceptable to landlord and landlady ; and unconscious of having done anything to excite the miller's displeasure, he pursued his journey without thinking farther of the matter.

Julian was a little surprised, and not altogether pleased, to find that his new acquaintance held the same road with him. He had many reasons for wishing to travel alone ; and the hostess's caution still rung in his ears. If this man, possessed of so much shrewdness as his countenance and conversation intimated, versatile, as he had occasion to remark, and disguised beneath his condition, should prove, as was likely, to be a concealed Jesuit or seminary-priest, travelling upon their great task of the conversion of England, and rooting out of the Northern heresy,—a more dangerous companion, for a person in his own circumstances, could hardly be imagined ; since keeping society with him might seem to authorize whatever reports had been spread concerning the attachment of his family to the Catholic cause. At the same time, it was very difficult, without actual rudeness, to shake off the company of one who seemed determined, whether spoken to or not, to remain along-side of him.

Peveril tried the experiment of riding slow ; but his companion, determined not to drop him, slackened his pace, so as to keep close by him. Julian

then spurred his horse to a full trot ; and was soon satisfied, that the stranger, notwithstanding the meanness of his appearance, was so much better mounted than himself, as to render vain any thoughts of outriding him. He pulled up his horse to a more reasonable pace, therefore, in a sort of despair. Upon his doing so, his companion, who had been hitherto silent, observed, that Peveril was not so well qualified to try speed upon the road, as he would have been had he abode by his first bargain of horse-flesh that morning.

Peveril assented dryly, but observed, that the animal would serve his immediate purpose, though he feared it would render him indifferent company for a person better mounted.

“ By no means,” answered his civil companion ;
“ I am one of those who have travelled so much, as to be accustomed to make my journey at any rate of motion which may be most agreeable to my company.”

Peveril made no reply to this polite intimation, being too sincere to tender the thanks which, in courtesy, were the proper answer.—A second pause ensued, which was broken by Julian asking the stranger whether their roads were likely to lie long together in the same direction.

“ I cannot tell,” said the stranger, smiling, “ unless I knew which way you were travelling.”

“ I am uncertain how far I shall go to-night,”

said Julian, willingly misunderstanding the purport of the reply.

“And so am I,” replied the stranger; “but though my horse goes better than yours, I think it will be wise to spare him; and in case our road continues to lie the same way, we are like to sup, as we have dined together.”

Julian made no answer whatever to this round intimation, but continued to ride on, turning, in his own mind, whether it would not be wisest to come to a distinct explanation with his pertinacious attendant, and to explain, in so many words, that it was his pleasure to travel alone. But, besides that the sort of acquaintance which they had formed during dinner, rendered him unwilling to be directly uncivil towards a person of gentleman-like manners, he had also to consider that he might very possibly be mistaken in this man's character and purpose; in which case, the cynically refusing the society of a sound Protestant, would afford as pregnant matter of suspicion, as travelling in company with a disguised Jesuit.

After brief reflection, therefore, he resolved to endure the encumbrance of the stranger's society, until a fair opportunity should occur to rid himself of it; and, in the meantime, to act with as much caution as he possibly could, in any communication that might take place between them; for Dame Whitecraft's parting caution still rang

anxiously in his ears, and the consequences of his own arrest upon suspicion, must deprive him of every opportunity of serving his father, or the Countess, or Major Bridgenorth, upon whose interest, also, he had promised himself to keep an eye.

While he revolved these things in his mind, they had journeyed several miles without speaking ; and now entered upon a more waste country, and worse roads, than they had hitherto found, being, in fact, approaching the more hilly county of Derbyshire. In travelling on a very stony and uneven lane, Julian's horse repeatedly stumbled ; and, had he not been supported by the rider's judicious use of aid and bit, must at length certainly have fallen under him.

"These are times which crave wary riding, sir," said his companion ; "and by your seat in the saddle, and your hand on the rein, you seem to understand it."

"I have been long a horseman, sir," answered Peveril.

"And long a traveller too, sir, I should suppose ; since, by the great caution you observe, you seem to think the human tongue requires a curb, as well as the horse's jaws."

"Wiser men than I have been of opinion," answered Peveril, "that it were a part of prudence

to be silent, when men have little or nothing to say."

"I cannot approve of their opinion," answered the stranger. "All knowledge is gained by communication, either with the dead, through books, or, more pleasingly, through the conversation of the living. The *deaf and dumb*, alone, are excluded from improvement; and surely their situation is not so enviable that we should imitate them."

At this illustration, which awakened a startling echo in Peveril's bosom, the young man looked hard at his companion; but in the composed countenance, and calm blue eye, he read no consciousness of a farther meaning than the words immediately and directly implied. He paused a moment, and then answered, "You seem to be a person, sir, of shrewd apprehension; and I should have thought it might have occurred to you, that, in the present suspicious times, men may, without censure, avoid communication with strangers. You know not me; and to me you are totally unknown. There is not room for much discourse between us, without trespassing on the general topics of the day, which carry in them seeds of quarrel between friends, much more betwixt strangers. At any other time, the society of an intelligent companion would have been most acceptable upon my solitary ride; but at present——"

“ At present !” said the other, interrupting him. “ You are like the old Romans, who held that *hostis* meant both a stranger and an enemy. I will therefore be no longer a stranger. My name is Ganlesse—by profession I am a Roman Catholic priest—I am travelling here in dread of my life—and I am very glad to have you for a companion.”

“ I thank you for the information, with all my heart,” said Peveril ; “ and to avail myself of it to the uttermost, I must beg of you to ride forward, or lag behind, or take a side-path, at your own pleasure ; for as I am no Catholic, and travel upon business of high concernment, I am exposed both to risk and delay, and even to danger, by keeping such suspicious company. And so, Master Ganlesse, keep your own pace, and I will keep the contrary ; for I beg leave to forbear your company.”

As Peveril spoke thus, he pulled up his horse, and made a full stop.

The stranger burst out a-laughing. “ What !” he said, “ you forbear my company for a trifle of danger ? Saint Anthony ! How the warm blood of the Cavaliers is chilled in the young men of the present day ! This young gallant, now, has a father, I warrant, who has endured as many adventures for hunted priests, as a knight-errant for distressed damsels.”

“ This raillery avails nothing, sir,” said Peveril. “ I must request you will keep your own way.”

“ My way is yours,” said the pertinacious Master Ganlesse, as he called himself ; “ and we will both travel the safer, that we journey in company. I have the receipt of fern-seed, man, and walk invisible. Besides, you would not have me quit you in this lane, where there is no turn to right or left ?”

Peveril moved on, desirous to avoid open violence ; for which the indifferent tone of the traveller, indeed, afforded no apt pretext ; yet highly disliking his company, and determined to take the first opportunity to rid himself of it.

The stranger proceeded the same pace with him, keeping cautiously on his bridle-hand, as if to secure that advantage in case of a struggle. But his language did not intimate the least apprehension. “ You do me wrong,” he said to Peveril, “ and you equally wrong yourself. You are uncertain where to lodge to-night,—trust to my guidance. Here is an ancient hall, within four miles, with an old knightly Pantaloon for its lord—an all-be-ruffed Dame Barbara for the lady gay—a Jesuit, in a butler’s habit, to say grace—an old tale of Edgehill and Worster fights to relish a cold venison pasty, and a flask of claret mantled with cobwebs—a bed for you in the priest’s hiding-hole—and,

for aught I know, pretty Mistress Betty, the dairy-maid, to make it ready."

"This has no charms for me, sir," said Peveril, who, in spite of himself, could not but be amused with the ready sketch which the stranger gave of many an old mansion in Cheshire and Derbyshire, where the owners retained the ancient faith of Rome.

"Well, I see I cannot charm you in this way," continued his companion; "I must strike another key. I am no longer Ganlesse, the seminary priest, but (changing his tone, and snuffling in the nose) Simon Canter, a poor preacher of the word, who travels this way to call sinners to repentance; and to strengthen, and to edify, and to fructify, among the scattered remnant who hold fast the truth.—What say you to this, sir?"

"I admire your versatility, sir, and could be entertained with it at another time. At present, sincerity is more in request."

"Sincerity!" said the stranger;—"A child's whistle, with but two notes in it—yea, yea, and nay, nay. Why, man, the very Quakers have renounced it, and have got in its stead a gallant recorder, called Hypocrisy, that is somewhat like Sincerity in form, but of much greater compass, and combines the whole gamut. Come, be ruled—be a disciple of Simon Canter for the evening, and we will leave the old tumble-down castle of

the knight aforesaid, on the left hand, for a new brick-built mansion, erected by an eminent salt-boiler from Namptwich, who expects the said Simon to make a strong spiritual pickle for the preservation of a soul somewhat corrupted by the evil communications of this wicked world. What say you ? He has two daughters—brighter eyes never beamed under a pinched hood ; and for myself, I think there is more fire in those who live only to love and to devotion, than in your court beauties, whose hearts are running on twenty follies beside. You know not the pleasure of being conscience-keeper to a pretty precisian, who in one breath repeats her foibles, and in the next confesses her passion. Perhaps, though, you may have known such in your day ? Come, sir, it grows too dark to see your blushes ; but I am sure they are burning on your cheek.”

“ You take great freedom, sir,” said Peveril, as they now approached the end of the lane, where it opened on a broad common ; “ and you seem rather to count more on my forbearance, than you have room to do with safety. We are now nearly free of the lane which has made us companions for this last half hour. To avoid your farther company, I will take the turn to the left, upon that common ; and if you follow me, it shall be at your peril. Observe, I am well armed ; and you will fight at odds.”

“ Not at odds,” returned the provoking stranger, “ while I have my brown jennet, with which I can ride round and around you at pleasure ; and this text, of a handful in length, (shewing a pistol, which he drew from his bosom,) which discharges very convincing doctrine on the pressure of a forefinger, and is apt to equalize all odds, as you call them, of youth and strength. Let there be no strife between us, however—the moor lies before us—choose your path on it—I take the other.”

“ I wish you good night, sir,” said Peveril to the stranger. “ I ask your forgiveness, if I have misconstrued you in anything ; but the times are perilous, and a man’s life may depend on the society in which he travels.”

“ True,” said the stranger ; “ but in your case, the danger is already undergone, and you should seek to counteract it. You have travelled in my company long enough to devise a handsome branch of the Popish Plot. How will you look, when you see come forth, in comely folio form, *The Narrative of Simon Canter, otherwise called Stephen Ganlesse, concerning the horrid Popish Conspiracy for the Murther of the King, and Massacre of all Protestants, as given on oath to the Honourable House of Commons ; setting forth, how far Julian Peveril, younger of Martindale Castle, is concerned in carrying on the same——*”

“ How, sir ? What mean you ?” said Peveril, much startled.

“ Nay, sir,” replied his companion, “ do not interrupt my title-page. Now that Oates and Bedloe have drawn the great prizes, the subordinate discoverers get little but by the sale of their Narrative ; and Janeway, Newman, Simmons, and every bookseller of them, will tell you that the title is half the narrative. Mine shall therefore set forth the various schemes you have communicated to me, of landing ten thousand soldiers from the Isle of Man upon the coast of Lancashire ; and marching into Wales, to join the ten thousand pilgrims who are to be shipped from Spain ; and so completing the destruction of the Protestant religion, and of the devoted city of London. Truly, I think such a Narrative, well-spiced with a few horrors, and published *cum privilegio parliamenti*, might, though the market be somewhat overstocked, be still worth some twenty or thirty pieces.”

“ You seem to know me, sir,” said Peveril ; “ and if so, I think I may fairly ask you your purpose in thus bearing me company, and the meaning of all this rhapsody. If it be mere banter, I can endure it within proper limit ; although it is uncivil on the part of a stranger. If you have any farther purpose, speak it out ; I am not to be trifled with.”

“ Good, now,” said the stranger, laughing, “ into what an unprofitable chafe you have put yourself ! An Italian *fuoruscito*, when he desires a parley with you, takes aim from behind a wall, with his long gun, and prefaces his conference with *Posso tirare*. So does your man-of-war fire a gun across the bows of a Hans-mogan Indiaman, just to bring her to ; and so do I shew Master Julian Peveril, that, if I were one of the honourable society of witnesses and informers, with whom his imagination has associated me for these two hours past, he is as much within my danger now, as what he is ever likely to be.” Then, suddenly changing his tone to serious, which was in general ironical, he added, “ Young man, when the pestilence is diffused through the air of a city, it is in vain men would avoid the disease, by seeking solitude, and shunning the company of their fellow-sufferers.”

“ In what, then, consists their safety ?” said Peveril, willing to ascertain, if possible, the drift of his companion’s purpose.

“ In following the counsels of wise physicians ;” such was the stranger’s answer.

“ And as such,” said Peveril, “ you offer me your advice ?”

“ Pardon me, young man,” said the stranger, haughtily, “ I see no reason I should do so.—I am not,” he added, in his former tone, “ your phy-

sician feed—I offer no advice—I only say it would be wise that you sought it.”

“And from whom, or where, can I obtain it?” said Peveril. “I wander in this country, like one in a dream; so much a few months have changed it. Men who formerly occupied themselves with their own affairs, are now swallowed up in matters of state policy; and those tremble under the apprehension of some strange and sudden convulsion of empire, who were formerly only occupied by the fear of going to bed supperless. And to sum the matter, I meet a stranger, apparently well acquainted with my name and concerns, who first attaches himself to me, whether I will or no; and then refuses me explanation of his business, while he menaces me with the strangest accusations.”

“Had I meant such infamy,” said the stranger, “believe me, I had not given you the thread of my intrigue. But be wise, and come on with me. There is, hard by, a small inn, where, if you can take a stranger’s warrant for it, we shall sleep in perfect security.”

“Yet you yourself,” said Peveril, “but now were anxious to avoid observation; and in that case, how can you protect me?”

“Pshaw! I did but silence that tattling landlady, in the way in which such people are most readily hushed; and for Topham, and his brace of night

owls, they must hawk at other and lesser game than I should prove."

Peveril could not help admiring the easy and confident indifference with which the stranger seemed to assume a superiority to all the circumstances of danger around him ; and after hastily considering the matter with himself, came to the resolution to keep company with him for this night, at least ; and to learn, if possible, who he really was, and to what party in the estate he was attached. The boldness and freedom of his talk seemed almost inconsistent with his following the perilous, though at that time the gainful, trade of an informer. No doubt, such persons assumed every appearance which could insinuate them into the confidence of their destined victims ; but Julian thought he discovered in this man's manner, a wild and reckless frankness, which he could not but connect with the idea of sincerity in the present case. He therefore answered, after a moment's recollection, " I embrace your proposal, sir ; although, by doing so, I am reposing a sudden, and perhaps an unwary, confidence."

" And what am I, then, reposing in you ?" said the stranger. " Is not our confidence mutual ?"

" No ; much the contrary. I know nothing of you whatever—you have named me ; and, knowing me to be Julian Peveril, know you may travel with me in perfect security."

“The devil I do!” answered his companion. “I travel in the same security as with a lighted petard, which I may expect to explode every moment. Are you not the son of Peveril of the Peak, with whose name Prelacy and Popery are so closely allied, that no old woman of either sect in Derbyshire, concludes her prayer without a petition to be freed from all three? And do you not come from the Popish Countess of Derby, bringing, for aught I know, a whole army of Manxmen in your pocket, with full complement of arms, ammunition, baggage, and a train of field artillery?”

“It is not very likely I should be so poorly mounted,” said Julian, laughing, “if I had such a weight to carry. But lead on, sir. I see I must wait for your confidence, till you think proper to confer it; for you are already so well acquainted with my affairs, that I have nothing to offer you in exchange for it.”

“*Allons*, then,” said his companion; “give your horse the spur, and raise the curb rein, lest he measure the ground with his nose, instead of his paces. We are not now more than a furlong or two from the place of entertainment.”

They mended their pace accordingly, and soon arrived at the small solitary inn which the traveller had mentioned. When its light began to twinkle before them, the stranger, as if recollecting something he had forgotten, “By the way, you must

have a name to pass by ; for it may be ill travelling under your own, as the fellow who keeps this house is an old Cromwellian. What will you call yourself?—My name is—for the present—Ganlesse.”

“ There is no occasion to assume a name at all,” answered Julian. “ I do not incline to use a borrowed one, especially as I may meet with some one who knows my own.”

“ I will call you Julian, then,” said Master Ganlesse ; “ for Peveril will smell, in the nostrils of mine host, of idolatry, conspiracy, Smithfield faggots, fish upon Fridays, the murder of Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey, and the fire of purgatory.”

As he spoke thus, they alighted under the great broad-branched oak tree, which served to canopy the ale-bench, which, at an earlier hour, had groaned under the weight of a frequent conclave of rustic politicians. Ganlesse, as he dismounted, whistled in a particularly shrill note, and was answered from within the house.

CHAP. IV.

He was a fellow in a peasant's garb ;
Yet one could censure you a woodcock's carving,
Like any courtier at the ordinary.

The Ordinary.

THE person who appeared at the door of the little inn to receive Ganlesse, as we mentioned in our last chapter, sung, as he came forward, this scrap of an old ballad,—

“ Good even to you, Diccon ;
And how have you sped ?
Bring you the bonny bride
To banquet and bed ? ”

To which Ganlesse answered, in the same tone and tune,—

“ Content thee, kind Robin ;
He need little care,
Who brings home a fat buck
Instead of a hare.”

“ You have missed your blow, then,” said the other, in reply.

“ I tell you I have not,” answered Ganlesse ;

“but you will think of nought but your own thriving occupation—May the plague that belongs to it stick to it! though it hath been the making of thee.”

“A man must live, Diccon Ganlesse,” said the other.

“Well, well,” said Ganlesse, “bid my friend welcome, for my sake. Hast thou got any supper?”

“Reeking like a sacrifice—Chaubert has done his best. That fellow is a treasure! give him a farthing candle, and he will cook a good supper with it.—Come in, sir. My friend’s friend is welcome, as we say in my country.”

“We must have our horses looked to first,” said Peveril, who began to be considerably uncertain about the character of his companions—“that done, I am for you.”

Ganlesse gave a second whistle; a groom appeared, who took charge of both their horses, and they themselves entered the inn.

The ordinary room of a poor inn seemed to have undergone some alterations, to render it fit for company of a higher description. There were a buffet, a couch, and one or two other pieces of furniture, of a style inconsistent with the appearance of the place. The table-cloth, which was ready laid, was of the finest damask; and the spoons, forks, &c. were of silver. Peveril looked at this apparatus with some surprise; and again turning his

eyes attentively upon his travelling companion Ganlesse, he could not help discovering, (by the aid of imagination, perhaps,) that though insignificant in person, plain in features, and dressed like one in indigence, there lurked still about his person and manners, that indefinable ease of manner which belongs only to men of birth and quality, or to those who are in the constant habit of frequenting the best company. His companion, whom he called Will Smith, although tall, and rather good-looking, besides being much better dressed, had not, nevertheless, exactly the same ease of demeanour; and was obliged to make up for the want, by an additional proportion of assurance. Who these two persons could be, Peveril could not attempt even to form a guess. There was nothing for it, but to watch their manner and conversation.

After speaking a moment in whispers, Smith said to his companion, "We must go look after our nags for ten minutes, and allow Chaubert to do his office."

"Will he not appear, and minister before us, then?" said Ganlesse.

"What! he?—he shift a trencher—he hand a cup?—No, you forget whom you speak of. Such an order were enough to make him fall on his own sword—he is already on the borders of despair, because no craw-fish are to be had."

"Alack-a-day!" replied Ganlesse. "Heaven

forbid I should add to such a calamity ! To stable, then, and see we how our steeds eat their provender, while ours is getting ready."

They adjourned to the stable accordingly, which, though a poor one, had been hastily supplied with whatever was necessary for the accommodation of four excellent horses ; one of which, that from which Ganlesse was just dismounted, the groom we have mentioned was cleaning and dressing by the light of a huge wax-candle.

" I am still so far Catholic," said Ganlesse, laughing, as he saw that Peveril noticed this piece of extravagance. " My horse is my saint, and I dedicate a candle to him."

" Without asking so great a favour for mine, which I see standing behind yonder old hen-coop," replied Peveril, " I will at least relieve him of his saddle and bridle."

" Leave him to the lad of the inn," said Smith ; " he is not worthy any other person's handling ; and I promise you, if you slip a single buckle, you will so flavour of that stable duty, that you might as well eat roast-beef as ragouts, for any relish you will have of them."

" I love roast-beef as well as ragouts, at any time," said Peveril, adjusting himself to a task which every young man should know how to perform when need is ; " and my horse, though it be

but a sorry jade, will champ better on hay and corn, than on an iron bit."

While he was unsaddling his horse, and shaking down some litter for the poor wearied animal, he heard Smith observe to Ganlesse,—“ By my faith, Dick, thou hast fallen into poor Slender’s blunder ; missed Anne Page, and brought us a great lubberly post-master’s boy.”

“ Hush ! he will hear thee,” answered Ganlesse ; “ there are reasons for all things—it is well as it is. But, prithee, tell thy fellow to help the youngster.”

“ What !” replied Smith, “ d’ye think I am mad ? —Ask Tom Beacon—Tom of Newmarket—Tom of ten thousand, to touch such a four-legged brute as that ?—Why, he would turn me away on the spot—discard me, i’faith. It was all he would do to take in hand your own, my good friend ; and if you consider him not the better, you are like to stand groom to him yourself to-morrow.”

“ Well, Will,” answered Ganlesse, “ I will say that for thee, thou hast a set of the most useless, scoundrelly, insolent vermin about thee, that ever eat up a poor gentleman’s revenues.”

“ Useless ? I deny it,” replied Smith. “ Every one of my fellows does something or other, so exquisitely, that it were sin to make him do anything else—it is your jacks-of-all-trades who are masters of none.—But hark to Chaubert’s signal !

The coxcomb is twangling it on the lute, to the tune of *Eveillez vous, belle endormie*.—Come, Master What d'ye call, (addressing Peveril,)—get ye some water, and wash this filthy witness from your hand, as Betterton says in the play; for Chaubert's cookery is like Friar Bacon's Head—time is—time was—time will soon be no more.”

So saying, and scarce allowing Julian time to dip his hands in a bucket, and dry them on a horse cloth, he hurried him from the stable back to the supper-chamber.

Here all was prepared for their meal, with an epicurean delicacy, which rather belonged to the saloon of a palace, than the cabin in which it was displayed. Four dishes of silver, with covers of the same metal, smoked on the table; and three seats were placed for the company. Beside the lower end of the board, was a small side-table, to answer the purpose of what is now called a dumb waiter; on which several flasks reared their tall, stately, and swan-like crests, above glasses and rummers. Clean covers were also placed within reach; and a small travelling-case of morocco, hooped with silver, displayed a number of bottles, containing the most approved sauces that culinary ingenuity had then invented.

Smith, who occupied the lower seat, and seemed to act as president of the feast, motioned the two travellers to take their places and begin. “I

would not stay a grace-time," he said, "to save a whole nation from perdition. We could bring no chauffettes with any convenience; and even Chaubert is nothing, unless his dishes are tasted in the very moment of projection. Come, uncover, and let us see what he has done for us.—Hum!—ha!—ay—squab-pigeons—wild-fowl—young chickens—venison cutlets—and a space in the centre, wet, alas! by a gentle tear from Chaubert's eye, where should have been the *soupe d'ecrivisses*. The zeal of that poor fellow is ill repaid by his paltry ten louis per month."

"A mere trifle," said Ganlesse; "but, like yourself, Will, he serves a generous master."

The repast now commenced; and Julian, though he had seen his young friend the Earl of Derby, and other gallants, affect a considerable degree of interest and skill in the science of the kitchen, and was not himself either an enemy or a stranger to the pleasures of a good table, found, that, on the present occasion, he was a mere novice. Both his companions, but Smith in especial, seemed to consider that they were now engaged in the only true and real business of life; and weighed all its minutiae with a proportional degree of accuracy. To carve the morsel in the most delicate manner—and to apportion the proper seasoning with the accuracy of a chemist—to be aware, exactly, of the order in which one dish should succeed an-

other, and to do plentiful justice to all—was a minuteness of science to which Julian had hitherto been a stranger.

At length Ganlesse paused, and declared the supper exquisite. “But, my friend Smith,” he added, “are your wines curious? When you brought all that trash of plates and trumpery into Derbyshire, I hope you did not leave us at the mercy of the strong ale of the shire, as thick and muddy as the squires who drink it?”

“Did I not know that *you* were to meet me, Dick Ganlesse?” answered their host. “And can you suspect me of such an omission? It is true, you must make champagne and claret serve, for my Burgundy would not bear travelling. But if you have a fancy for sherry, or Vin de Cahors, I have a notion Chaubert and Tom Beacon have brought some for their own drinking.”

“Perhaps the gentlemen would not care to impart,” said Ganlesse.

“O fie!—anything in the way of civility,” replied Smith. “They are, in truth, the best-natured lads alive, when treated respectfully; so that if you would prefer——”

“By no means,” said Ganlesse—“a glass of champagne will serve in a scarcity of better.”

“The cork shall start obsequious to my thumb,” said Smith; and as he spoke, he untwisted the

wire, and the cork struck the roof of the cabin. Each guest took a large rummer glass of the sparkling beverage, which Peveril had judgment and experience enough to pronounce exquisite.

"Give me your hand, sir," said Smith; "it is the first word of sense you have spoken this evening."

"Wisdom, sir," replied Peveril, "is like the best ware in the pedlar's pack, which he never produces till he knows his customer."

"Sharp as mustard," returned the *bon vivant*; "but be wise, most noble pedlar, and take another rummer of this same flask, which you see I have held in an oblique position for your service—not permitting it to retrograde to the perpendicular. Nay, take it off before the bubble bursts on the rim, and the zest is gone."

"You do me honour, sir," said Peveril, taking the second glass. "I wish you a better office than that of my cup-bearer."

"You cannot wish Will Smith one more congenial to his nature," said Ganlesse. "Others have a selfish delight in the objects of sense. Will thrives, and is happy, by imparting them to others."

"Better help men to pleasures than to pains, Master Ganlesse," answered Smith, somewhat angrily.

"Nay, wrath thee not, Will," said Ganlesse; "and speak no words in haste, lest you may have

cause to repent at leisure. Do I blame thy social concern for the pleasures of others? Why, man, thou doest therein most philosophically multiply thine own. A man has but one throat, and can but eat, with his best efforts, some five or six times a-day; but thou dinest with every friend that cuts up a capon, and art quaffing wine in other men's gullets, from morning to night—*et sic de cæteris.*”

“Friend Ganlesse,” returned Smith, “I prithee beware—thou knowest I can cut gullets as well as tickle them.”

“Ay, Will,” answered Ganlesse, carelessly; “I think I have seen thee wave thy whinyard at the throat of a Hogan-Mogan—a Netherlandish weasand, which expanded only on thy natural and mortal objects of aversion—Dutch cheese, rye-bread, pickled herring, onions, and Geneva.”

“For pity's sake, forbear the description!” said Smith; “thy words overpower the perfumes, and flavour the apartment like a dish of salmagundi!”

“But for an epiglottis like mine,” continued Ganlesse, “down which the most delicate morsels are washed by such claret as thou art now pouring out, thou could'st not, in thy bitterest mood, wish a worse fate than to be necklaced somewhat tight by a pair of white arms.”

“By a tenpenny cord,” answered Smith; “but not till you were dead; that thereafter you be pre-

sently disembowelled, you being yet alive ; that your head be then severed from your body, and your body divided into quarters, to be disposed of at his Majesty's pleasure.—How like you that, Master Richard Ganlesse ?”

“ E'en as you like the thoughts of dining on bran-bread and milk-porridge—an extremity which you trust never to be reduced to. But all this shall not prevent me from pledging you in a cup of sound claret.”

As the claret circulated, the glee of the company increased ; and Smith, placing the dishes which had been made use of upon the side-table, stamped with his foot on the floor, and the table, sinking down a trap, again rose, loaded with olives, sliced neat's tongue, caviare, and other provocatives for the circulation of the bottle.

“ Why, Will,” said Ganlesse, “ thou art a more complete mechanist than I suspected ; thou hast brought thy scene-shifting inventions to Derbyshire in marvellously short time.”

“ A rope and pullies can be easily come by,” answered Will ; “ and with a saw and a plane, I can manage that business in half a day. I love that knack of clean and secret conveyance—thou knowest it was the foundation of my fortunes.”

“ It may be the wreck of them too, Will,” replied his friend.

“ True, Diccon,” answered Will ; “ but, *dum vi-*

vinus, vivamus, that is my motto ; and therewith I present you a brimmer to the health of the fair lady you wot of."

"Let it come, Will," replied his friend, and the flask circulated briskly from hand to hand.

Julian did not think it prudent to seem a check on their festivity, as he hoped in its progress something might occur to enable him to judge of the character and purposes of his companions. But he watched them in vain. Their conversation was animated and lively, and often bore reference to the literature of the period, in which the elder seemed particularly well skilled. They also talked freely of the Court, and of that numerous class of gallants who were then described as "men of wit and pleasure about town ;" and to whom it seemed probable they themselves appertained.

At length the universal topic of the Popish Plot was started ; upon which Ganlesse and Smith seemed to entertain the most opposite opinions. Ganlesse, if he did not maintain the authority of Oates in its utmost extent, contended that at least it was confirmed in a great measure by the murder of Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey, and the letters written by Coleman to the confessor of the French King.

With much more noise, and less power of reasoning, Will Smith hesitated not to ridicule and run down the whole discovery, as one of the wild-

est and most causeless alarms which had ever been sounded in the ears of a credulous public. "I shall never forget," he said, "Sir Godfrey's most original funeral. Two bouncing parsons, well armed with sword and pistol, mounted the pulpit, to secure the third fellow who preached from being murdered in the face of the congregation. Three parsons in one pulpit—three suns in one hemisphere—no wonder men stood aghast at such a prodigy."

"What then, Will," answered his companion, "you are one of those who think the good knight murdered himself, in order to give credit to the Plot?"

"By my faith not I," said the other; "but some true blue Protestant might do the job for him, in order to give the thing a better colour.—I will be judged by our silent friend, whether that be not the most feasible solution of the whole."

"I pray you, pardon me, gentlemen," said Julian; "I am but just landed in England, and am a stranger to the particular circumstances which have thrown the nation into such ferment. It would be the highest degree of assurance in me to give my opinion betwixt gentlemen who argue the matter so ably; besides, to say truth, I confess weariness—your wine is more potent than I expected, or I have drunk more of it than I meant to do."

“Nay, if an hour’s nap will refresh you,” said the elder of the strangers, “make no ceremony with us. Your bed—all we can offer as such—is that old-fashioned Dutch-built sofa, as the last new phrase calls it. We shall be early stirrers to-morrow morning.”

“And that we may be so,” said Smith, “I propose that we do sit up all this night—I hate lying rough, and detest a pallet-bed. So have at another flask, and the newest lampoon to help it out—

Now a plague of their votes
Upon Papists and Plots,
And be d—d Doctor Oates.
Tol de rol.”

“Nay, but our Puritanic host,” said Ganlesse.

“I have him in my pocket, man—his eyes, ears, nose, and tongue,” answered his boon companion, “are all in my possession.”

“In that case, when you give him back his eyes and nose, I pray you keep his ears and tongue,” answered Ganlesse. “Seeing and smelling are organs sufficient for such a knave—to speak and hear, are things he should have no manner of pretensions to.”

“I grant you it were well done,” answered Smith; “but it were a robbing of the hangman and the pillory; and I am an honest fellow, who would give Dun and the devil his due. So,

All joy to great Cæsar,
Long life, love, and pleasure ;
May the King live for ever,
'Tis no matter for us, boys."

While this Bacchanalian scene proceeded, Julian had wrapt himself closely in his cloak, and stretched himself on the couch which they had shewn to him. He looked towards the table he had left—the tapers seemed to become hazy and dim as he gazed—he heard the sound of voices, but they ceased to convey any impression to his understanding ; and in a few minutes, he was faster asleep than he had ever been in the whole course of his life.

CHAP. V.

The Gordon then his bugle blew,
And said, awa, awa ;
The House of Rhodis is all on flame,
I hauld it time to ga'.

Old Ballad.

WHEN Julian awakened the next morning, all was still and vacant in the apartment. The rising sun, which shone through the half-closed shutters, shewed some reliques of the last night's banquet, which his confused and throbbing head assured him had been carried into a debauch.

Without being much of a boon companion, Julian, like other young men of the time, was not in the habit of shunning wine, which was then used in considerable quantities ; and he could not help being surprised, that the few cups he had drunk over night had produced on his frame the effects of excess. He rose up, adjusted his dress, and sought in the apartment for water to perform his morning ablutions, but without success. Wine there was on the table ; and beside it one stool stood, and

another lay, as if thrown down in the heedless riot of the evening. Surely, he thought to himself, the wine must have been very powerful, which rendered me insensible to the noise my companions must have made ere they finished their carouse.

With momentary suspicion he examined his weapons, and the packet which he had received from the Countess, and kept in a secret pocket of his upper-coat, bound close about his person. All was safe ; and the very operation reminded him of the duties which lay before him. He left the apartment where they had supped, and went into another, wretched enough, where, in a truckle-bed, were stretched two bodies, covered with a rug, the heads belonging to which were amicably deposited upon the same truss of hay. The one was the black shock-head of the groom ; the other, graced with a long thrumb night-cap, shewed a grizzled pate, and a grave caricatured countenance, which the hook-nose and lantern-jaws proclaimed to belong to the Gallic minister of good cheer, whose praises he had heard sung forth on the preceding evening. These worthies seemed to have slumbered in the arms of Bacchus as well as of Morpheus, for there were broken flasks on the floor ; and their deep snoring alone shewed that they were alive.

Bent upon resuming his journey, as duty and expedience alike dictated, Julian next descended the trap-stair, and essayed a door at the bottom of

the steps. It was fastened within. He called—no answer was returned. It must be, he thought, the apartment of the revellers, now probably sleeping as soundly as their dependants still slumbered, and as he himself had done a few minutes before. Should he awake them?—To what purpose? They were men with whom accident had involved him against his own will; and situated as he was, he thought it wise to take the earliest opportunity of breaking off from society, which was suspicious, and might be perilous. Ruminating thus, he essayed another door, which admitted him to a bedroom, where lay another harmonious slumberer. The mean utensils, pewter measures, empty cans and casks, with which this room was lumbered, proclaimed it that of the host, who slept surrounded by his professional implements of hospitality and stock in trade.

This discovery relieved Peveril from some delicate embarrassment which he had formerly entertained. He put upon the table a piece of money, sufficient, as he judged, to pay his share of the preceding night's reckoning; not caring to be indebted for his entertainment to the strangers, whom he was leaving without the formality of an adieu.

His conscience cleared of this gentleman-like scruple, Peveril proceeded with a light heart, though somewhat a dizzy head, to the stable, which he easily recognized among a few other paltry out-

houses. His horse, refreshed with rest, and perhaps not unmindful of his services the evening before, neighed as his master entered the stable ; and Peveril accepted the sound as an omen of a prosperous journey. He paid the augury with a sieve-full of corn ; and, while his palfrey profited by his attention, walked into the fresh air to cool his heated blood, and consider what course he should pursue in order to reach the Castle of Martindale before sunset. His acquaintance with the country in general, gave him confidence that he could not have greatly deviated from the nearest road ; and with his horse in good condition, he conceived he might easily reach Martindale before night-fall.

Having adjusted his route in his mind, he returned into the stable to prepare his steed for the journey, and soon led him into the ruinous courtyard of the inn, bridled, saddled, and ready to be mounted. But as Peveril's hand was upon the mane, and his left foot in the stirrup, a hand touched his cloak, and the voice of Ganlesse said, " What, Master Peveril, is this your foreign breeding ? or have you learned in France to take French leave of your friends ?"

Julian started like a guilty thing, although a moment's reflection assured him that he was neither wrong nor in danger. " I cared not to disturb you," he said, " although I did come as far as the door of your chamber. I supposed your

friend and you might require, after our last night's revel, rather sleep than ceremony. I left my own bed, though a rough one, with more reluctance than usual ; and as my occasions oblige me to be an early traveller, I thought it best to depart without leave-taking. I have left a token for mine host, on the table of his apartment."

"It was unnecessary," said Ganlesse ; "the rascal is already overpaid.—But are you not rather premature in your purpose of departing? My mind tells me that Master Julian Peveril had better proceed with me to London, than turn aside for any purpose whatever. You may see already, that I am no ordinary person, but a master-spirit of the time. For the cuckoo I travel with, and whom I indulge in his prodigal follies, he also has his uses. But you are of a different cast ; and I not only would serve you, but even wish you to be my own."

Julian gazed on this singular person when he spoke. We have already said his figure was mean and slight, with very ordinary and unmarked features, unless we were to distinguish the lightnings of a keen grey eye, which corresponded in its careless and prideful glance, with the haughty superiority which the stranger assumed in his conversation. It was not till after a momentary pause, that Julian replied, "Can you wonder, sir, that in my circumstances—if they are indeed known to

you—I should decline unnecessary confidence on the affairs of moment which have called me hither, or refuse the company of a stranger, who assigns no reason for desiring mine?”

“Be it as you list, young man,” answered Ganlesse; “only remember hereafter, you had a fair offer—it is not every one to whom I would have made it. If we should meet hereafter, on other, and on worse terms, impute it to yourself, and not to me.”

“I understand not your threat,” answered Peveril, “if a threat be indeed implied. I have done no evil—I feel no apprehension—and I cannot, in common sense, conceive why I should suffer for refusing my confidence to a stranger, who seems to require that I should submit me blindfold to his guidance.”

“Farewell, then, Sir Julian of the Peak,—that may soon be,” said the stranger, removing the hand which he had as yet left carelessly on the horse’s bridle.

“How mean you by that phrase?” said Julian; “and why apply such a title to me?”

The stranger smiled, and only answered, “Here our conference ends. The way is before you. You will find it longer and rougher than that by which I would have guided you.”

So saying, Ganlesse turned his back and walked toward the house. On the threshold he turned

about once more, and seeing that Peveril had not yet moved from the spot, he again smiled and beckoned to him ; but Julian, recalled by that sign to recollection, spurred his horse, and set forward on his journey.

It was not long ere his local acquaintance with the country enabled him to regain the road to Martindale, from which he had diverged on the preceding evening for about two miles. But the roads, or rather the paths, of this wild country, so much satirized by their native poet, Cotton, were so complicated in some places, so difficult to be traced in others, and so unfit for hasty travelling in almost all, that, in spite of Julian's utmost exertions, and though he made no longer delay upon the journey than was necessary to bait his horse at a small hamlet through which he passed at noon, it was night-fall ere he reached an eminence, from which, an hour sooner, the battlements of Martindale-Castle would have been visible ; and where, when they were hid in night, their situation was indicated by a light constantly maintained in a lofty tower, called the Warder's Turret ; and which domestic beacon had acquired, through all the neighbourhood, the name of Peveril's Pole-star.

This was regularly kindled at curfew toll, and supplied with as much wood and charcoal as maintained the light till sunrise ; and at no period was the ceremonial omitted, saving during the space

intervening between the death of a Lord of the Castle and his interment. When this last event had taken place, the nightly beacon was rekindled with some ceremony, and continued till fate called the successor to sleep with his fathers. It is not known from what circumstance the practice of maintaining this light originally sprung. Tradition spoke of it doubtfully. Some thought it was the signal of general hospitality, which, in ancient times, guided the wandering knight, or the weary pilgrim, to rest and refreshment. Others spoke of it as a "love-lighted watchfire," by which the provident anxiety of a former lady of Martindale guided her husband homeward through the terrors of a midnight storm. The less favourable construction of unfriendly neighbours of the dissenting persuasion, ascribed the origin and continuance of this practice, to the assuming pride of the family of Peveril, who thereby chose to intimate their ancient *suzeraineté* over the whole country, in the manner of the admiral, who carries the lantern in the poop, for the guidance of the fleet. And in the former times, our old friend, Master Solsgrace, dealt from the pulpit many a hard hit against Sir Geoffrey, as he that had raised his horn, and set up his candlestick on high. Certain it is, that all the Peverils, from father to son, had been especially attentive to the maintenance of this custom, as something intimately connected with the

dignity of their family ; and in the hands of Sir Geoffrey, the observance was not like to be omitted.

Accordingly, the polar-star of Peveril had continued to beam more or less brightly during all the vicissitudes of the Civil War ; and glimmered, however faintly, during the subsequent period of Sir Geoffrey's depression. But he was often heard to say, and sometimes to swear, that while there was a perch of woodland left to the estate, the old beacon-grate should not lack replenishing. All this his son Julian well knew ; and therefore it was with no ordinary feelings of surprise and anxiety, that, looking in the direction of the Castle, he perceived that the light was not visible. He halted—rubbed his eyes—shifted his position—and endeavoured, in vain, to persuade himself that he had mistaken the point from which the polar-star of his house was visible, or that some newly intervening obstacle, the growth of a plantation, perhaps, or the erection of some building, intercepted the light of the beacon. But a moment's reflection assured him, that from the high and free situation which Martindale-Castle bore in reference to the surrounding country, this could not have taken place ; and the inference necessarily forced itself upon his mind, that Sir Geoffrey, his father, was either deceased, or that the family must have been disturbed by some strange calamity, under the

pressure of which, their wonted custom and solemn usage had been neglected.

Under the influence of undefinable apprehension, young Peveril now struck the spurs into his jaded steed, and forcing him down the broken and steep path, at a pace which set safety at defiance, he arrived at the village of Martindale-Moultrasie, eagerly desirous to ascertain the cause of this ominous eclipse. The street, through which his tired horse paced slow and reluctantly, was now deserted and empty ; and scarcely a candle twinkled from a casement, excepting from the latticed window of the little inn, called the Peveril Arms, from which a broad light shone, and several voices were heard in rude festivity.

Before the door of this inn, the jaded palfrey, guided by the instinct or experience which makes a hackney well acquainted with the outside of a house of entertainment, made so sudden and determined a pause, that, notwithstanding his haste, the rider thought it best to dismount, expecting to be readily supplied with a fresh horse by Roger Raine, the landlord, the ancient dependant of his family. He also wished to relieve his anxiety, by inquiring concerning the state of things at the Castle, when he was surprised to hear, bursting from the tap-room of the loyal old host, a well-known song of the Commonwealth time, which some puritanical wag had written in reprehension

of the Cavaliers, and their dissolute courses, and in which his father came in for a lash of the satirist.

Ye thought in the world there was no power to tame ye,
So you tippled and drabb'd till the saints overcame ye ;
“ Forsooth,” and “ Ne'er stir,” sir, have vanquished, “ G—
d—n me,”

Which nobody can deny.

There was bluff old Sir Geoffrey loved brandy and mum well,
And to see a beer-glass turn'd over the thumb well ;
But he fled like the wind, before Fairfax and Cromwell,
Which nobody can deny.

Some strange revolution, Julian was aware, must have taken place, both in the village and in the Castle, ere these sounds of unseemly insult could have been poured forth in the very inn which was decorated with the armorial bearings of his family ; and not knowing how far it might be advisable to intrude on these unfriendly revellers, without the power of repelling or chastising their insolence, he led his horse to a back-door, which, as he recollected, communicated with the landlord's apartment, determined to make private inquiry at him concerning the state of matters at the Castle. He knocked repeatedly, and as often called on Roger Raine with an earnest but stifled voice. At length a female voice replied, by the usual inquiry, “ Who is there ?”

“ It is I, Dame Raine—I, Julian Peveril—tell your husband to come to me presently.”

“ Alack, and a well-a-day, Master Julian, if it be really you—you are to know my poor good man has gone where he can come to no one ; but, doubtless, we shall all go to him, as Matthew Chamberlain says.”

“ He is dead, then ?” said Julian. “ I am extremely sorry——”

“ Dead six months and more, Master Julian ; and let me tell you, it is a long time for a lone woman, as Matt Chamberlain says.”

“ Well, do you or your chamberlain undo the door. I want a fresh horse ; and I want to know how things are at the Castle.”

“ The Castle—lack-a-day !—Chamberlain—Matthew Chamberlain—I say, Matt !”

Matt Chamberlain apparently was at no great distance, for he presently answered her call ; and Peveril, as he stood close to the door, could hear them whispering to each other, and distinguish in a great measure what they said. And here it may be noticed, that Dame Raine, accustomed to submit to the authority of old Roger, who vindicated as well the husband’s domestic prerogative, as that of the monarch in the state, had, when left a buxom widow, been so far incommoded by the exercise of her newly acquired independence, that she had recourse, upon all occasions, to the advice of Matt Chamberlain ; and as Matt began no longer to go slipshod, and in a red night-cap, but wore Spanish

shoes, and a high-crowned beaver, (at least of a Sunday,) and moreover was called Master Matthew by his fellow-servants, the neighbours in the village argued a speedy change of the name on the sign-post ; nay, perhaps, of the very sign itself, for Matthew was a bit of a Puritan, and no friend to Peveril of the Peak.

“ Now counsel me, an you be a man, Matt Chamberlain,” said Widow Raine ; “ for never stir, if here be not Master Julian’s own self, and he wants a horse, and what not, and all as if things were as they wont to be.”

“ Why, dame, an ye will walk by counsel,” said the Chamberlain, “ e’en shake him off—let him be jogging while his boots are green. This is no world for folks to scald their fingers in other folks’ broth.”

“ And that is well spoken, truly,” answered Dame Raine ; “ but then, look you, Matt, we have eaten their bread, and, as my poor goodman used to say——”

“ Nay, nay, dame, they that walk by the counsel of the dead, shall have none of the living ; and so you may do as you list ; but if you will walk by mine, drop latch, and draw bolt, and bid him seek quarters farther—that is my counsel.”

“ I desire nothing of you, sirrah,” said Peveril, “ save but to know how Sir Geoffrey and his lady do ?”

“ Lack-a-day !—lack-a-day !” in a tone of sympathy, was the only answer he received from the landlady ; and the conversation betwixt her and her chamberlain was resumed, but in a tone too low to be overheard.

At length Matt Chamberlain spoke aloud, and with a tone of authority : “ We undo no doors at this time of night, for it is against the Justices’ orders, and might cost us our licence ; and for the Castle, the road up to it lies before you, and I think you know it as well as we do.”

“ And I know you,” said Peveril, remounting his wearied horse, “ for an ungrateful churl, whom, on the first opportunity, I will assuredly cudgel to a mummy.”

To this menace Matthew made no reply, and Peveril presently heard him leave the apartment, after a few earnest words betwixt him and his mistress.

Impatient at this delay, and at the evil omen implied in these people’s conversation and deportment, Peveril, after some vain spurring of his horse, which positively refused to move a step farther, dismounted once more, and was about to pursue his journey on foot, notwithstanding the extreme disadvantage under which the high riding-boots of the period laid those who attempted to walk with such encumbrances, when he was stopped by a gentle call from the window.

Her counsellor was no sooner gone, than the good-nature and habitual veneration of the dame for the house of Peveril, and perhaps some fear for her counsellor's bones, induced her to open the casement, and cry, but in a low and timid tone, "Hist ! hist ! Master Julian—be you gone ?"

"Not yet, dame," said Julian ; "though it seems my stay is unwelcome."

"Nay, but good young master, it is because men counsel so differently ; for here was my poor old Roger Raine would have thought the chimney-corner too cold for you ; and here is Matt Chamberlain thinks the cold court-yard is warm enough."

"Never mind that, dame," said Julian ; "do but only tell me what has happened at Martindale-Castle ? I see the beacon is extinguished."

"Is it in troth ?—ay, like enough—then good Sir Geoffrey is gone to Heaven with my old Roger Raine !"

"Sacred Heaven !" exclaimed Peveril ; "when was my father taken ill ?"

"Never, as I knows of," said the dame ; "but, about three hours since, arrived a party at the Castle, with buff-coats and bandaliers, and one of the Parliament's folks, like in Oliver's time. My old Roger Raine would have shut the gates of the inn against them, but he is in the church-yard, and Matt says it is against law ; and so they came

in and refreshed men and horse, and sent for Master Bridgenorth, that is at Moultrassie-Hall even now ; and so they went up to the Castle, and there was a fray, it is like, as the old Knight was no man to take napping, as poor Roger Raine used to say. Always the officers had the best on't ; and reason there is, since they had law of their side, as our Matthew says. But since the pole-star of the Castle is out, as your honour says, why, doubtless, the old gentleman is dead."

" Gracious Heaven !—Dear dame, for love or gold, let me have a horse to make for the Castle."

" The Castle ?" said the dame ; " the Round-heads, as my poor Roger called them, will kill you as they have killed your father ! Better creep into the wood-house, and I will send Bett with a blanket and some supper—Or stay—my old Dobbin stands in the little stable beside the hen-coop—e'en take him, and make the best of your way out of the country, for there is no safety here for you. Hear what songs some of them are singing at the tap !—so take Dobbin, and do not forget to leave your own horse instead."

Peveril waited to hear no further, only, that just as he turned to go off to the stable, the compassionate female was heard to exclaim,—“ O Lord ! what will Matthew Chamberlain say ?” but instantly added, “ Let him say what he will, I may dispose of what's my own.”

With the haste of a double-fee'd hostler did Julian exchange the equipments of his jaded brute with poor Dobbin, who stood quietly tugging at his rack-full of hay, without dreaming of the business which was that night destined for him. Notwithstanding the darkness of the place, Julian succeeded marvellous quickly in preparing for his journey ; and leaving his own horse to find its way to Dobbin's rack by instinct, he leaped upon his new acquisition, and spurred him sharply against the hill, which rises steeply from the village to the Castle. Dobbin, little accustomed to such exertions, snorted, panted, and trotted as briskly as he could, until at length he brought his rider before the entrance gate of his father's ancient seat.

The moon was now rising, but the portal was hidden from its beams, being situated, as we have mentioned elsewhere, in a deep recess betwixt two large flanking towers. Peveril dismounted, turned his horse loose, and advanced to the gate, which, contrary to his expectation, he found was open. He entered the large court-yard ; and could then perceive that lights yet twinkled in the lower part of the building, although he had not before observed them, owing to the height of the outward walls. The main door, or great hall-gate, as it was called, was, since the partially decayed state of the family, seldom opened, save on occasions of

particular ceremony. A smaller postern door served the purpose of ordinary entrance ; and to that Julian now repaired. This also was open—a circumstance which would of itself have alarmed him, had he not already had so many causes for apprehension. His heart sunk within him as he turned to the left, through a small outward hall, towards the great parlour, which the family usually occupied as a sitting apartment ; and his alarm became still greater, when, on a nearer approach, he heard proceeding from thence the murmur of several voices. He threw the door of the apartment wide ; and the sight which was thus displayed, warranted all the evil bodings which he had entertained.

In front of him stood the old Knight, whose arms were strongly secured, over the elbows, by a leathern belt drawn tight round them, and made fast behind ; two ruffianly-looking men, apparently his guards, had hold of his doublet. The scabbardless sword which lay on the floor, and the empty sheath which hung by Sir Geoffrey's side, shewed the stout old Cavalier had not been reduced to this state of bondage without an attempt at resistance. Two or three persons, having their backs turned towards Julian, sat round a table, and appeared engaged in writing—the voices which he had heard were theirs, as they murmured to each other. Lady Peveril—the emblem of

death, so pallid was her countenance—stood at the distance of a yard or two from her husband, upon whom her eyes were fixed with an intense-ness of gaze, like that of one who looks her last on the object which she loves the best. She was the first to perceive Julian ; and she exclaimed, “ Merciful Heaven !—my son !—the misery of our house is complete !”

“ My son !” echoed Sir Geoffrey, starting from the sullen state of dejection, and swearing a deep oath—“ thou art come in the right time, Julian. Strike me one good blow—cleave me that traitorous thief from the crown to the brisket ; and that done, I care not what comes next.”

The sight of his father’s situation made the son forget the inequality of the contest which he was about to provoke.

“ Villains,” he said, “ unhand him !” and rushing on the guards with his drawn sword, compelled them to let go Sir Geoffrey, and stand on their own defence.

Sir Geoffrey, thus far liberated, shouted to his lady, “ Undo the belt, dame, and we will have three good blows for it yet—they must fight well that beat both father and son.”

But one of those men who had started up from the writing-table when the fray commenced, prevented Lady Peveril from rendering her husband this assistance ; while another easily mastered the

hampered Knight, though not without receiving several severe kicks from his heavy boots—his condition permitting him no other mode of defence. A third, who saw that Julian, young, active, and animated with the fury of a son who fights for his parents, was compelling the two guards to give ground, seized on his collar, and attempted to master his sword. Suddenly dropping that weapon, and snatching one of his pistols, Julian fired it at the head of the person by whom it was thus assailed. He did not drop, but, staggering back as if he had received a severe blow, shewed Peveril, as he sunk into a chair, the features of old Bridgenorth, blackened with the explosion, which had even set fire to a part of his grey hair. A cry of astonishment escaped from Julian ; and in the alarm and horror of the moment, he was easily secured and disarmed by those with whom he had been at first engaged.

“Heed it not, Julian,” said Sir Geoffrey ; “heed it not, my brave boy—that shot has balanced all accompts !—but how—what the devil—he lives !—Was your pistol loaded with chaff ? or has the foul fiend given him proof against lead ?”

There was some reason for Sir Geoffrey’s surprise, since, as he spoke, Major Bridgenorth collected himself—sat up in the chair as one who recovers from a stunning blow—then rose, and wiping with his handkerchief the marks of the

explosion from his face, he approached Julian, and said, in the same cold unaltered tone in which he usually expressed himself, "Young man, you have reason to bless God, who has this day saved you from the commission of a great crime."

"Bless the devil, ye crop-eared knave!" exclaimed Sir Geoffrey; "for nothing less than the father of all fanatics saved your brains from being blown about like the rinsings of Beelzebub's porridge-pot!"

"Sir Geoffrey," said Major Bridgenorth, "I have already told you, that with you I will hold no argument; for to you I am not accountable for any of my actions."

"Master Bridgenorth," said the lady, making strong effort to speak, and to speak with calmness, "whatever revenge your christian state of conscience may permit you to take on my husband—I—I, who have some right to experience compassion at your hand, for most sincerely did I compassionate you when the hand of Heaven was heavy on you—I implore you not to involve my son in our common ruin!—Let the destruction of the father and mother, with the ruin of our ancient house, satisfy your resentment for any wrong which you have ever received at my husband's hand."

"Hold your peace, housewife," said the Knight; "you speak like a fool, and meddle with what

concerns you not.—Wrong at *my* hand? The cowardly knave has ever had but even too much right. Had I cudgelled the cur soundly when he first bayed at me, the cowardly mongrel had been now crouching at my feet, instead of flying at my throat. But if I get through this action, as I have got through worse weather, I will pay off old scores, as far as tough crab-tree and old iron will bear me out.”

“ Sir Geoffrey,” replied Bridgenorth, “ if the birth you boast of has made you blind to better principles, it might have at least taught you civility. What do you complain of? I am a magistrate ; and I execute a warrant, addressed to me by the first authority in the state. I am a creditor also of yours ; and law arms me with powers to recover my own property from the hands of an improvident debtor.”

“ You a magistrate !” said the Knight ; “ much such a magistrate as Noll was a monarch. Your heart is up, I warrant, because you have the King’s pardon ; and are replaced on the bench, forsooth, to persecute the poor Papist. There was never turmoil in the state, but knaves had their vantage by it—never pot boiled, but the scum was cast up-permost.”

“ For God’s sake, my dearest husband,” said Lady Peveril, “ cease this wild talk ! It can but

incense Master Bridgenorth, who might otherwise consider, that in common charity——”

“ Incense him !” said Sir Geoffrey, impatiently interrupting her ; “ God’s-death, madam, you will drive me mad ! Have you lived so long in this world, and yet expect consideration and charity from an old starved wolf like that ? And if he had it, do you think that I, or you, madam, as my wife, are subjects for his charity ?—Julian, my poor fellow, I am sorry thou hast come so unluckily, since thy petronel was not better loaded—but thy credit is lost for ever as a marksman.”

This angry colloquy passed so rapidly on all sides, that Julian, scarce recovered from the extremity of astonishment with which he was overwhelmed at finding himself suddenly plunged into a situation of such extremity, had no time to consider in what way he could most effectually act for the succour of his parents. To speak Bridgenorth fair, seemed the more prudent course ; but to this his pride could hardly stoop ; yet he forced himself to say, with as much calmness as he could assume, “ Master Bridgenorth, since you act as a magistrate, I desire to be treated according to the laws of England ; and demand to know of what we are accused, and by whose authority we are arrested ?”

“ Here is another howlet for ye !” exclaimed the impetuous old Knight ; “ his mother speaks to a

Puritan of charity ; and thou must talk of law to a roundheaded rebel, with a wannion to you ! What warrant hath he, think ye, beyond the Parliament's or the devil's ?”

“ Who speaks of the Parliament ?” said a person entering, whom Peveril recognized as the official person whom he had before seen at the horse-dealer's, and who now bustled in with all the conscious dignity of plenary authority,—“ Who talks of the Parliament ?” he exclaimed. “ I promise you, enough has been found in this house to convict twenty plotters—Here be arms, and that good store. Bring them in, Captain.”

“ The very same,” exclaimed the Captain, approaching, “ which I mention in my printed Narrative of Information, lodged before the Honourable House of Commons ; they were commissioned from old Vander Huys of Rotterdam, by orders of Don John of Austria, for the service of the Jesuits.”

“ Now, by this light,” said Sir Geoffrey, “ they are the pikes, musketoons, and pistols, that have been hidden in the garret ever since Naseby fight !”

“ And here,” said the Captain's yoke-fellow, Everett, “ are proper priest's trappings—antiphoners, and missals, and copes, I warrant you—ay, and proper pictures too, for Papists to mutter and bow over.”

“ Now plague on thy snuffling whine,” said Sir

Geoffrey ; “ here is a rascal will swear my grandmother’s old farthingale to be priest’s vestments, and the story book of Owlenspiegel, a Popish missal !”

“ But how’s this, Master Bridgenorth ?” said Topham, addressing the magistrate ; “ your honour has been as busy as we have ; and you have caught another knave while we recovered these toys.”

“ I think, sir,” said Julian, “ if you look into your warrant, which, if I mistake not, names the persons whom you are directed to arrest, you will find you have no title to apprehend me.”

“ Sir,” said the officer, puffing with importance, “ I do not know who you are ; but I would you were the best man in England, that I might teach you the respect due to the warrant of the House. Sir, there steps not the man within the British seas, but I will arrest him on authority of this bit of parchment ; and I do arrest you accordingly.—What do you accuse him of, gentlemen ?”

Dangerfield swaggered forward, and peeping under Julian’s hat, “ Stop my vital breath,” he exclaimed, “ but I have seen you before, my friend, an I could but think where ; but my memory is not worth a bean, since I have been obliged to use it so much of late, in the behalf of the poor state. But I do know the fellow ; and I have seen him

amongst the Papists—I'll take that on my assured damnation."

"Why, Captain Dangerfield," said the Captain's smother, but more dangerous associate,—“verily, it is the same youth whom we saw at the horse-merchant's yesterday ; and we had matter against him then, only Master Topham did not desire us to bring it out."

"Ye may bring out what ye will against him now," said Topham, "for he hath blasphemed the warrant of the House. I think ye said ye saw him somewhere?"

"Ay, verily," said Everett, "I have seen him amongst the seminary pupils at Saint Omer's—he was who but he with the regents there."

"Nay, Master Everett, collect yourself," said Topham ; "for, as I think, you said you saw him at a consult of the Jesuits in London."

"It was *I* said so, Master Topham," said the undaunted Dangerfield ; "and mine is the tongue that will swear it."

"Good Master Topham," said Bridgenorth, "you may suspend farther inquiry at present, as it doth but fatigue and perplex the memory of the King's witnesses."

"You are wrong, Master Bridgenorth—clearly wrong. It doth but keep them in wind—only breathes them like greyhounds before a coursing match."

“ Be it so,” said Bridgenorth, with his usual indifference of manner ; “ but at present this youth must stand committed upon a warrant, which I will presently sign, of having assaulted me while in discharge of my duty as a magistrate, for the rescue of a person legally attached. Did you not hear the report of a pistol ?”

“ I will swear to it,” said Everett.

“ And I,” said Dangerfield. “ While we were making search in the cellar, I heard something very like a pistol-shot ; but I conceived it to be the drawing of a long-corked bottle of sack, to see whether there were any Popish relics in the inside on’t.”

“ A pistol-shot !” exclaimed Topham ; “ here might have been a second Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey’s matter.—Oh, thou real spawn of the red old dragon ! for he too would have resisted the House’s warrant, had we not taken him something at un-awares.—Master Bridgenorth, you are a judicious magistrate, and a worthy servant of the state—I would we had many such sound Protestant justices. Shall I have this young fellow away with his parents—what think you ?—or will you keep him for re-examination ?”

“ Master Bridgenorth,” said Lady Peveril, in spite of her husband’s efforts to interrupt her, “ for God’s sake, if ever you knew what it was to love one of the many children you have lost, or her who

is now left to you, do not pursue your vengeance to the blood of my poor boy ! I will forgive you all the rest—all the distress you have wrought—all the yet greater misery with which you threaten us ; but do not be extreme with one who never can have offended you ! Believe, that if your ears are shut against the cry of a despairing mother, those which are open to the complaint of all who sorrow, will hear my petition and your answer.”

The agony of mind and of voice with which Lady Peveril uttered these words, seemed to thrill through all present, though most of them were but too much inured to such scenes. Every one was silent, when, ceasing to speak, she fixed on Bridgenorth her eyes, glistening with tears, with the eager anxiety of one whose life or death seemed to depend upon the answer to be returned. Even Bridgenorth’s inflexibility seemed to be shaken ; and his voice was tremulous, as he answered, “ Madam, I would to God I had the present means of relieving your great distress, otherwise than by recommending to you a reliance upon Providence ; and that you take heed to your spirit, that it murmur not under this crook in your lot. For me, I am but as a rod in the hand of the strong man, which smites not of itself, but because it is wielded by the arm of him who holds the same.”

“ Even as I and my black rod are guided by the Commons of England,” said Master Topham,

who seemed marvellously pleased with the illustration.

Julian now thought it time to say something in his own behalf ; and he endeavoured to temper it with as much composure as it was possible for him to assume. " Master Bridgenorth," he said, " I neither dispute your authority, nor this gentleman's warrant——"

" You do not ?" said Topham. " O ho, master youngster, I thought we should bring you to your senses presently !"

" Then, if you so will it, Master Topham," said Bridgenorth, " thus it shall be. You shall set out with early day, taking with you, towards London, the persons of Sir Geoffrey and Lady Peveril ; and that they may travel according to their quality, you will allow them their coach, sufficiently guarded."

" I will travel with them myself," said Topham ; " for these rough Derbyshire roads are no easy riding ; and my very eyes are weary with looking on these bleak hills. In the coach I can sleep as sound as if I were in the House, and Master Bodderbrains on his legs."

" It will become you so to take your ease, Master Topham," answered Bridgenorth. " For this youth, I will take him under my charge, and bring him up myself."

" I may not be answerable for that, worthy

Master Bridgenorth, since he comes within the warrant of the House."

"Nay, but," said Bridgenorth, "he is only under custody for an assault, with the purpose of a rescue; and I counsel you against meddling with him, unless you have stronger guard. Sir Geoffrey is now old and broken, but this young fellow is in the flower of his youth, and hath at his beck all the debauched young Cavaliers of the neighbourhood—You will scarce cross the country without a rescue."

Topham eyed Julian wistfully, as a spider may be supposed to look upon a stray wasp which has got into his web, and which he longs to secure, though he fears the consequences of attempting him.

Julian himself replied, "I know not if this separation be well or ill meant on your part, Master Bridgenorth; but on mine, I am only desirous to share the fate of my parents; and therefore I will give my word of honour to attempt neither rescue nor escape, on condition you do not separate me from them."

"Do not say so, Julian," said his mother; "abide with Master Bridgenorth—my mind tells me he cannot mean so ill by us as his rough conduct would now lead us to infer."

"And I," said Sir Geoffrey, "know, that between the doors of my father's house and the gates

of hell, there steps not such a villain on the ground ! And if I wish my hands ever to be unbound again, it is because I hope for one downright blow at a grey head, that has hatched more treason than the whole Long Parliament."

" Away with thee," said the zealous officer ; " is Parliament a word for so foul a mouth as thine ? —Gentlemen," he added, turning to Everett and Dangerfield, " you will bear witness to this."

" To his having reviled the House of Commons —by G—d, that I will !" said Dangerfield ; " I will take it on my damnation."

" And verily," said Everett, " as he spoke of Parliament generally, he hath contemned the House of Lords also."

" Why, ye poor insignificant wretches," said Sir Geoffrey, " whose very life is a lie—and whose bread is perjury—would you pervert my innocent words almost as soon as they have quitted my lips ? I tell you the country is well weary of you ; and should Englishmen come to their senses, the jail, the pillory, the whipping-post, and the gibbet, will be too good preferment for such base blood-suckers.—And now, Master Bridgenorth, you and they may do your worst ; for I will not open my mouth to utter a single word while I am in the company of such knaves."

" Perhaps, Sir Geoffrey," answered Bridgenorth, " you would better have consulted your own safe-

ty in adopting that resolution a little sooner—the tongue is a little member, but it causes much strife.—You, Master Julian, will please to follow me, and without remonstrance or resistance ; for you must be aware that I have the means of compelling.”

Julian was, indeed, but too sensible, that he had no other course but that of submission to superior force ; but ere he left the apartment, he kneeled down to receive his father’s blessing, which the old man bestowed not without a tear in his eye, and in the emphatic words, “ God bless thee, my boy ; and keep thee good and true to Church and King, whatever wind shall bring foul weather !”

His mother was only able to pass her hand over his head, and to implore him, in a low tone of voice, not to be rash or violent in any attempt to render them assistance. “ We are innocent,” she said, “ my son—we are innocent—and we are in God’s hands. Be the thought our best comfort and protection.”

Bridgenorth now signed to Julian to follow him, which he did, accompanied, or rather conducted, by the two guards who had first disarmed him. When they had passed from the apartment, and were at the door of the outward hall, Bridgenorth asked Julian whether he should consider him as under parole ; in which case, he said, he would

dispense with all other security but his own promise.

Peveril, who could not help hoping somewhat from the favourable and unresentful manner in which he was treated by one whose life he had so recently attempted, replied, without hesitation, that he would give his parole for twenty-four hours, neither to attempt to escape by force nor by flight.

“It is wisely said,” replied Bridgenorth; “for though you might cause bloodshed, be assured that your utmost efforts could do no service to your parents.—Horses there—horses to the court-yard!”

The trampling of the horses was soon heard; and in obedience to Bridgenorth’s signal, and in compliance with his promise, Julian mounted one which was presented to him, and prepared to leave the house of his fathers, in which his parents were now prisoners, and to go, he knew not whither, under the custody of one known to be the ancient enemy of his race. He was rather surprised at observing, that Bridgenorth and he were about to travel without any other attendants.

When they were mounted, and as they rode slowly towards the outer-gate of the court-yard, Bridgenorth said to him, “It is not every one who would thus unreservedly commit his safety, by travelling at night, and unaided, with the hot-brained youth who so lately attempted his life.”

“ Master Bridgenorth,” said Julian, “ I might tell you truly, that I knew you not at the time when I directed my weapon against you ; but I must also add, that the cause in which I used it, might have rendered me, even had I known you, a slight respecter of your person. At present, I do know you ; and have neither malice against your person, nor the liberty of a parent to fight for. Besides, you have my word ; and when was a Peveril known to break it ?”

“ Ay,” replied his companion, “ a Peveril—a Peveril of the Peak !—a name which has long sounded like a war-trumpet in the land ; but which has now perhaps sounded its last loud note. Look back, young man, on the darksome turrets of your father’s house, which uplift themselves as proudly on the brow of the hill, as their owners raised themselves above the sons of their people. Think upon your father, a captive—yourself, in some sort, a fugitive—your light quenched—your glory abased—your estate wrecked and impoverished. Think that Providence has subjected the destinies of the race of Peveril to one, whom, in their aristocratic pride, they held as a plebeian upstart. Think of this ; and when you again boast of your ancestry, remember, that he who raiseth the lowly can also abase the high in heart.”

Julian did indeed gaze for an instant, with a swelling heart, upon the dimly-seen turrets of his

paternal mansion, on which poured the moonlight, mixed with long shadows of the towers and trees. But while he sadly acknowledged the truth of Bridgenorth's observation, he felt indignant at his ill-timed triumph. "If fortune had followed worth," he said, "the Castle of Martindale, and the name of Peveril, had afforded no room for their enemy's vainglorious boast. But those who have stood high on Fortune's wheel, must abide by the consequence of its revolutions. Thus much I will at least say for my father's house, that it has not stood unhonoured ; nor will it fall—if it is to fall—unlamented. Forbear, then, if you are indeed the Christian you call yourself, to exult in the misfortunes of others, or to confide in your own prosperity. If the light of our house be now quenched, God can rekindle it in his own good time."

Peveril broke off in extreme surprise ; for as he spoke the last words, the bright red beams of the family beacon began again to glimmer from its wonted watch-tower, chequering the pale moonbeam with a ruddier glow. Bridgenorth also gazed on this unexpected illumination with surprise, and not, as it seemed, without disquietude. "Young man," he resumed, "it can scarcely be but what Heaven intends to work great things by your hand, so singularly has that augury followed on your words."

So saying, he put his horse once more into mo-

tion ; and looking back, from time to time, as if to assure himself that the beacon of the Castle was actually rekindled, he led the way through the well-known paths and alleys, to his own house of Moultrassie, followed by Peveril, who, although sensible that the light might be altogether accidental, could not but receive as a good omen an event so intimately connected with the traditions and usages of his family.

They alighted at the hall-door, which was hastily opened by a female ; and while the deep tone of Bridgenorth called on the groom to take their horses, the well-known voice of his daughter Alice was heard to exclaim in thanksgiving to God, who had restored her father in safety.



CHAP. VI.

We meet, as men see phantoms in a dream,
Which glide and sigh, and sign, and move their lips,
But make no sound ; or, if they utter voice,
'Tis but a low and undistinguished moaning,
Which has nor word nor sense of utter'd sound.

The Chieftain.

WE said, at the conclusion of the last chapter, that a female form appeared at the door of Moultrassie-Hall ; and that the well-known accents of Alice Bridgenorth were heard to hail the return of her father, from what she naturally dreaded as a perilous visit to the Castle of Martindale.

Julian, who followed his conductor with a throbbing heart into the lighted hall, was therefore prepared to see her whom he best loved, with her arms thrown around her father. The instant she had quitted his paternal embrace, she was aware of the unexpected guest who had returned in his company. A deep blush, rapidly succeeded by deadly paleness, and again by a slighter suffusion, shewed plainly to her lover that his sudden ap-

pearance was anything but indifferent to her. He bowed profoundly—a courtesy which she returned with equal formality, but did not venture to approach more nearly, feeling at once the delicacy of his own situation and of hers.

Major Bridgenorth turned his cold, fixed, grey, melancholy glance, first on the one of them, and then on the other. “Some,” he said, gravely, “would, in my case, have avoided this meeting; but I have confidence in you both, although you are young, and beset with the snares incidental to your age. There are those within who should not know that ye have been acquainted. Wherefore, be wise, and be as strangers to each other.”

Julian and Alice exchanged glances as her father turned from them, and, lifting a lamp which stood in the entrance-hall, led the way to the interior apartment. There was little of consolation in this exchange of looks; for the sadness of Alice’s glance was mingled with fear, and that of Julian clouded by an anxious sense of doubt. The look also was but momentary; for Alice, springing to her father, took the light out of his hand, and, stepping before him, acted as the usher of both into the large oaken parlour, which has been already mentioned as the apartment in which Bridgenorth had spent the hours of dejection which followed the death of his consort and family. It was now lighted up as for the reception of com-

pany ; and five or six persons sat in it, in the plain, black, formal dress, which was affected by the formal Puritans of the time, in evidence of their contempt of the manners of the luxurious Court of Charles the Second ; amongst whom, excess of extravagance in apparel, like excess of every other kind, was highly fashionable.

Julian at first glanced his eyes but slightly along the range of grave and severe faces which composed this society—men, sincere perhaps in their pretensions to a superior purity of conduct and morals, but in whom that high praise was somewhat chastened by an affected austerity in dress and manners, allied to those Pharisees of old, who made broad their phylacteries, and would be seen of men to fast, and to discharge with rigid punctuality the observances of the law. Their dress was almost uniformly a black cloak and doublet, cut straight and close, and undecorated with lace or embroidery of any kind, black Flemish breeches and hose, square-toed shoes, with large roses made of serge ribbon. Two or three had large loose boots of calf-leather, and almost every one was begirt with a long rapier, which was suspended by leathern thongs, to a plain belt of buff, or of black leather. One or two of the elder guests, whose hair had been thinned by time, had their heads covered with a skull-cap of black silk or velvet, which, being drawn down betwixt the ears and the

skull, and permitting no hair to escape, occasioned the former to project in the ungraceful manner which may be remarked in old pictures, and which procured for the Puritans the term of "prick-eared Roundheads," so unceremoniously applied to them by their contemporaries.

These worthies were ranged against the wall, each in his ancient, high-backed, long-legged chair; neither looking towards, nor apparently discoursing with each other; but plunged in their own reflections, or awaiting, like an assembly of Quakers, the quickening power of divine inspiration.

Major Bridgenorth glided along this formal society with noiseless step, and a composed severity of manner, resembling their own. He paused before each in succession, and apparently communicated, as he passed, the transactions of the evening, and the circumstances under which the heir of Martindale Castle was now a guest at Moultrassie-Hall. Each seemed to stir at his brief detail, like a range of statues in an enchanted hall, starting into something like life, as a talisman is applied to them successively. Most of them, as they heard the narrative of their host, cast upon Julian a look of curiosity, blended with haughty scorn and the consciousness of spiritual superiority; though, in one or two instances, the milder influences of compassion were sufficiently visible. —Peveril would have undergone this gauntlet of

eyes with more impatience, had not his own been for the time engaged in following the motions of Alice, who glided through the apartment; and only speaking very briefly, and in whispers, to one or two of the company who addressed her, took her place beside a treble-hooded old lady, the only female of the party, and addressed herself to her in such earnest conversation, as might dispense with her raising her head, or looking at any others in the company.

Her father put a question, to which she was obliged to return an answer—"Where was Mistress Debbitch?"

"She had gone out," Alice replied, "early after sunset, to visit some old acquaintances in the neighbourhood, and she was not yet returned."

Major Bridgenorth made a gesture expressive of displeasure; and, not content with that, expressed his determined resolution that Dame Deborah should no longer remain a member of his family. "I will have those," he said aloud, and without regarding the presence of his guests, "and those only, around me, who know to keep within the sober and modest bounds of a Christian family. Who pretends to more freedom, must go out from among us, as not being of us."

A deep and emphatic humming noise, which was at that time the mode in which the Puritans signified their applause, as well of the doctrines

expressed by a favourite divine in the pulpit, as of those delivered in private society, ratified the approbation of the assessors, and seemed to secure the dismissal of the unfortunate governante, who stood thus detected of having strayed out of bounds. Even Peveril, although he had reaped considerable advantages, in his early acquaintance with Alice, from the mercenary and gossiping disposition of her governess, could not hear of her dismissal without approbation, so much was he desirous, that, in the hour of difficulty, which might soon approach, Alice might have the benefit of countenance and advice from one of her own sex, of better manners, and less suspicious probity, than Mistress Debbitch.

Almost immediately after this communication had taken place, a servant in mourning shewed his thin, pinched, and wrinkled visage in the apartment, announcing, with a voice more like a passing bell than the herald of a banquet, that refreshments were provided in an adjoining apartment. Gravely leading the way, with his daughter on one side, and the puritanical female whom we have distinguished on the other, Bridgenorth himself ushered his company, who followed, with little attention to order or ceremony, into the eating-room, where a substantial supper was provided.

In this manner, Peveril, although entitled, ac-

according to ordinary ceremonial, to some degree of precedence—a matter at that time considered as of as much importance as it is now regarded as insignificant—was left among the last of those who left the parlour ; and might indeed have brought up the rear of all, had not one of the company, who was himself late in the retreat, bowed, and resigned to Julian the rank in the company which had been usurped by others.

This act of politeness naturally induced Julian to examine the features of the person who had offered him this civility ; and he started to observe, under the pinched velvet-cap, and above the short band-strings, the countenance of Ganlesse, as he called himself—his companion on the preceding evening. He looked again and again, especially when all were placed at the supper board, and when, consequently, he had frequent opportunities of observing this person fixedly, without any breach of good manners. At first he wavered in his belief, and was much inclined to doubt the reality of his recollection ; for the difference of dress was such as to affect a considerable change of appearance ; and the countenance itself, far from exhibiting anything marked or memorable, was one of those ordinary visages which we see almost without remarking them, and which leave our memory so soon as the object is withdrawn from our eyes. But the impression upon his mind returned, and

became stronger, until it induced him to watch with peculiar attention the manners of the individual who had thus attracted his notice.

During the time of a very prolonged grace before meat, which was delivered by one of the company—who, from his Geneva band and serge doublet, presided, as Julian supposed, over some dissenting congregation—he noticed that this man kept the same demure and severe cast of countenance usually affected by the Puritans, and which rather caricatured the reverence unquestionably due upon such occasions. His eyes were turned upward, and his huge pent-house hat, with a high crown and broad brim, held in both hands before him, rose and fell with the cadences of the speaker's voice ; thus marking time, as it were, to the periods of the benediction. Yet when the slight bustle took place which attends the adjusting of chairs, &c., as men sit down to table, Julian's eye encountered that of the stranger ; and as their looks met, there glanced from those of the latter, an expression of satirical humour and scorn, which seemed to intimate internal ridicule of the gravity of his present demeanour.

Julian again sought to fix his eye, in order to ascertain that he had not mistaken the tendency of this transient expression, but the stranger did not allow him another opportunity. He might have been discovered by the tone of his voice ; but

the individual in question spoke little, and in whispers, which was indeed the fashion of the whole company, whose demeanour at table resembled that of mourners at a funeral feast.

The entertainment itself was coarse, though plentiful ; and must, according to Julian's opinion, be distasteful to one so exquisitely skilled in good cheer, and so capable of enjoying, critically and scientifically, the genial preparations of his companion, Smith, as Ganlesse had shewn himself on the preceding evening. Accordingly, upon close observation, he remarked, that the food which he took upon his plate, remained there unconsumed ; and that his actual supper consisted only of a crust of bread, with a glass of wine.

The repast was hurried over with the haste of those, who think it shame, if not sin, to make mere animal enjoyments the means of consuming time, or of receiving pleasure ; and when men wiped their mouths and moustaches, Julian remarked, that the object of his curiosity used a handkerchief of the finest cambric—an article rather inconsistent with the exterior plainness, not to say coarseness, of his appearance. He used also several of the more minute refinements, then only observed at tables of the higher rank ; and Julian thought he could discern, at every turn, something of courtly manners and gestures, under the pre-

cise and rustic simplicity of the character which he had assumed.

But if this were indeed that same Ganlesse with whom Julian had met on the preceding evening, and who had boasted the facility with which he could assume any character which he pleased to represent for the time, what could be the purpose of his present disguise? He was, if his own words could be credited, a person of some importance, who dared to defy the danger of those officers and informers, before whom all ranks at that time trembled; nor was he likely, as Julian conceived, without some strong purpose, to subject himself to such a masquerade as the present, which could not be other than irksome to one whose conversation proclaimed him of light life and free opinion. Was his appearance here for good or for evil? Did it respect his father's house, or his own person, or the family of Bridgenorth? Was the real character of Ganlesse known to the master of the house, inflexible as he was in all which concerned morals as well as religion? If not, might not the machinations of a brain so subtle, affect the peace and happiness of Alice Bridgenorth?

These were questions which no reflection could enable Peveril to answer. His eyes glanced from Alice to the stranger; and new fears, and undefined suspicions, in which the safety of that beloved and lovely girl was implicated, mingled with

the deep anxiety which already occupied his mind, on account of his father, and his father's house.

He was in this tumult of mind, when, after a thanksgiving as long as the grace, the company arose from table, and were instantly summoned to the exercise of family worship. A train of domestics, grave, sad, and melancholy as their superiors, glided in to assist at this act of devotion, and ranged themselves at the lower end of the apartment. Most of these men were armed with long tucks, as the straight stabbing swords, much used by Cromwell's soldiery, were then called. Several had large pistols also ; and the corslets or cuirasses of some were heard to clank, as they seated themselves to partake in this act of devotion. The ministry of him whom Julian had supposed a preacher, was not used on this occasion. Major Bridgenorth himself read and expounded a chapter of Scripture, with much strength and manliness of expression, although so as not to escape the charge of fanaticism. The nineteenth chapter of Jeremiah was the portion of Scripture which he selected ; in which, under the type of breaking a potter's vessel, the prophet presages the desolation of the Jews. The lecturer was not naturally eloquent ; but a strong, deep, and sincere conviction of the truth of what he said, supplied him with language of energy and fire, as he drew a parallel between the abominations of the worship of Baal,

and the corruptions of the Church of Rome—so favourite a topic with the Puritans of that period ; and denounced against the Catholics, and those who favoured them, that hissing and desolation which the prophet directed against the city of Jerusalem. His hearers made a yet closer application than the lecturer himself suggested ; and many a dark proud eye intimated, by a glance on Julian, that on his father's house were already, in some part, realized these dreadful maledictions.

The lecture finished, Bridgenorth summoned them to unite with him in prayer ; and on a slight change of arrangements amongst the company, which took place as they were about to kneel down, Julian found his place next to the single-minded and beautiful object of his affection, as she knelt down, in her lowliness, to adore her Creator. A short time was permitted for mental devotion ; during which, Peveril could hear her half-breathed petition for the promised blessings of peace on earth, and good will towards the children of men.

The prayer which ensued was in a different tone. It was poured forth by the same person who had officiated as chaplain at the table ; and was in the tone of a Boanerges, or Son of Thunder—a denouncer of crimes—an invoker of judgments—almost a prophet of evil and of destruction. The testimonies and the sins of the day were not forgotten—the mysterious murder of Sir

Edmondsbury Godfrey was insisted upon—and thanks and praise were offered, that the very night on which they were assembled, had not seen another offering of a Protestant magistrate, to the blood-thirsty fury of the revengeful Catholics.

Never had Julian found it more difficult, during an act of devotion, to maintain his mind in a frame befitting the posture and the occasion; and when he heard the speaker return thanks for the downfall and devastation of his family, he was strongly tempted to have started upon his feet, and charged him with offering a tribute, stained with falsehood and calumny, at the throne of truth itself. He resisted, however, an impulse which it would have been insanity to have yielded to, and his patience was not without its reward; for when his fair neighbour arose from her knees, the lengthened and prolonged prayer being at last concluded, he observed that her eyes were streaming with tears; and one glance with which she looked at him in that moment, shewed more of affectionate interest for him in his fallen fortunes and precarious condition, than he had been able to obtain from her when his worldly estate seemed so much the more exalted of the two.

Cheered and fortified with the conviction that one bosom in the company, and that in which he most eagerly longed to secure an interest, sympathized with his distress, he felt strong to endure

whatever was to follow, and shrunk not from the stern still smile with which, one by one, the meeting regarded him, as, gliding to their several places of repose, they indulged themselves at parting with a look of triumph on one, whom they considered as their captive enemy.

Alice also passed by her lover, her eyes fixed on the ground, and answered his low obeisance without raising them. The room was now empty, but for Bridgenorth and his guest, or prisoner; for it is difficult to say in which capacity Peveril ought to regard himself. He took an old brazen lamp from the table, and, leading the way, said, at the same time, "I must be the uncourtly chamberlain, who am to usher you to a place of repose, more rude, perhaps, than you have been accustomed to occupy."

Julian followed him, in silence, up an old-fashioned winding staircase, within a turret. At the landing-place on the top, was a small apartment, where an ordinary pallet bed, two chairs, and a small stone table, were the only furniture. "Your bed," continued Bridgenorth, as if desirous to prolong their interview, "is not of the softest; but innocence sleeps as sound upon straw as on down."

"Sorrow, Major Bridgenorth, finds little rest on either," replied Julian. "Tell me, for you seem to await some question from me, what is to be the

fate of my parents, and why you separate me from them ?”

Bridgenorth, for answer, indicated with his finger the mark which his countenance still shewed from the explosion of Julian's pistol.

“ That,” replied Julian, “ is not the real cause of your proceedings against me. It cannot be, that you, who have been a soldier, and are a man, can be surprised or displeased by my interference in the defence of my father. Above all, you cannot, and I must needs say you do not, believe that I would have raised my hand against you personally, had there been a moment's time for recognition.”

“ I may grant all this,” said Bridgenorth ; “ but what are you the better for my good opinion, or for the ease with which I can forgive you the injury which you aimed at me ? You are in my custody as a magistrate, accused of abetting the foul, bloody, and heathenish plot, for the establishment of Popery, the murder of the King, and the general massacre of all true Protestants.”

“ And on what grounds, either of fact or suspicion, dare any one accuse me of such a crime ?” said Julian. “ I have hardly heard of the plot, save by the mouth of common rumour, which, while it speaks of nothing else, takes care to say nothing distinctly even on that subject.”

“ It may be enough for me to tell you,” replied

Bridgenorth, "and perhaps it is a word too much—that you are a discovered intriguer—a spied spy—who carries tokens and messages betwixt the Popish Countess of Derby, and the Catholic party in London. You have not conducted your matters with such discretion, but that this is well known, and can be sufficiently proved. To this charge, which you are well aware you cannot deny, these men, Everett and Dangerfield, are not unwilling to add, from the recollection of your face, other passages, which will certainly cost your life when you come before a Protestant jury."

"They lie like villains," said Peveril, "who hold me accessory to any plot either against the King, the nation, or the state of religion; and for the Countess, her loyalty has been too long, and too highly proved, to permit her being implicated in such injurious suspicions."

"What she has already done," said Bridgenorth, his face darkening as he spoke, "against the faithful champions of pure religion, hath sufficiently shewn of what she is capable. She hath betaken herself to her rock, and sits, as she thinks, in security, like the eagle reposing after his bloody banquet. But the arrow of the fowler may yet reach her—the shaft is whetted—the bow is bended—and it will be soon seen whether Amalek or Israel shall prevail. But for thee, Julian Peveril—why should I conceal it from thee?—my heart

yearns for thee as a woman's for her first-born. To thee I will give, at the expense of my own reputation—perhaps at the risk of personal suspicion—for who, in these days of doubt, shall be exempted from it—to thee, I say, I will give means of escape, which else were impossible to thee. The staircase of this turret descends to the gardens—the postern-gate is unlatched—on the right hand lie the stables, where you will find your own horse—take it, and make for Liverpool—I will give you credit with a friend under the name of Simon Simonson, one persecuted by the prelates; and he will expedite your passage from the kingdom.”

“Major Bridgenorth,” said Julian, “I will not deceive you. Were I to accept your offer of freedom, it would be to attend to a higher call than that of mere self-preservation. My father is in danger—my mother in sorrow—the voices of religion and nature call me to their side. I am their only child—their only hope—I will aid them or perish with them.”

“Thou art mad,” said Bridgenorth—“aid them thou canst not—perish with them thou well may'st, and even accelerate their ruin; for, in addition to the charges with which thy unhappy father is loaded, it would be no slight aggravation, that while he meditated arming and calling together the Catholics and High Churchmen of Cheshire and Derbyshire, his son should prove to be the confidential

agent of the Countess of Derby, who aided her in making good her stronghold against the Protestant commissioners, and was dispatched by her to open secret communication with the Popish interest in London."

"You have twice stated me as such an agent," said Peveril, resolved that his silence should not be construed into an admission of the charge, though he felt that it was in some degree well founded—"What reason have you for such an allegation?"

"Will it suffice for a proof of my intimate acquaintance with your mystery," replied Bridge-north, "if I should repeat to you the last words which the Countess used to you when you left the Castle of that Amalekitish woman? Thus she spoke: 'I am a forlorn widow,' she said, 'whom sorrow has made selfish.'"

Peveril started, for these were the very words the Countess had used; but he instantly recovered himself, and replied, "Be your information of what nature it will, I deny, and I defy it, so far as it attaches aught like guilt to me. There lives not a man more innocent of a disloyal thought, or of a traitorous purpose. What I say for myself, I will, to the best of my knowledge, say and maintain, on account of the noble Countess, to whom I am indebted for nurture."

"Perish, then, in thy obstinacy!" said Bridge-

north ; and turning hastily from him, he left the room, and Julian heard him hasten down the narrow staircase, as if distrusting his own resolution.

With a heavy heart, yet with that confidence in an overruling Providence which never forsakes a good and brave man, Peveril betook himself to his lowly place of repose.

CHAP. VII.

The course of human life is changeful still,
As is the fickle wind and wandering rill ;
Or, like the light dance which the wild breeze weaves
Amidst the faded race of fallen leaves ;
Which now its breath bears down, now tosses high,
Beats to the earth, or wafts to middle sky.
Such, and so varied, the precarious play
Of fate with man, frail tenant of a day.

Anonymous.

WHILST, overcome with fatigue, and worn out by anxiety, Julian Peveril slumbered as a prisoner in the house of his hereditary enemy, Fortune was preparing his release by one of those sudden frolics with which she loves to confound the calculations and expectancies of humanity ; and as she fixes on strange agents for such purposes, she condescended to employ, on the present occasion, no less a personage than Mistress Deborah Debbitch.

Instigated, doubtless, by the pristine reminiscences of former times, no sooner had that most prudent and considerate dame found herself in the vicinity of the scenes of her earlier days, than she

bethought herself of a visit to the ancient house-keeper of Martindale Castle, Dame Ellesmere by name, who, long retired from active service, resided at the keeper's lodge, in the west thicket, with her nephew, Lance Outram, subsisting upon the savings of her better days, and on a small pension allowed by Sir Geoffrey to her age and faithful services.

Now, Dame Ellesmere and Mistress Deborah had not by any means been formerly on so friendly a footing, as this haste to visit her might be supposed to intimate. But years had taught Deborah to forget and forgive; or perhaps she had no special objection, under cover of a visit to Dame Ellesmere, to take the chance of seeing what changes time had made on her old admirer the keeper. Both inhabitants were in the cottage, when, after having seen her master set forth on his expedition to the Castle, Mistress Debbitch, dressed in her very best gown, footed it through gutter, and over stile, and by pathway green, to knock at their door, and to lift the latch at the hospitable invitation which bade her come in.

Dame Ellesmere's eyes were so dim, that, even with the aid of spectacles, she failed to recognize, in the portly and mature personage who entered their cottage, the tight well-made lass, who, presuming on her good looks and flippant tongue, had so often provoked her by insubordination; and

her former lover, the redoubted Lance, not being conscious that ale had given rotundity to his own figure, which was formerly so slight and active, and that brandy had transferred to his nose the colour which had once occupied his cheeks, was unable to discover that Deborah's French cap, composed of sarsenet and Brussels lace, shaded the features which had so often procured him a rebuke from Dr Dummerar, for suffering his eyes, during the time of prayers, to wander to the maid-servants' bench.

In brief, the blushing visitor was compelled to make herself known ; and when known, was received by aunt and nephew with the most sincere cordiality.

The home-brewed was produced ; and, in lieu of more vulgar food, a few slices of venison presently hissed in the frying-pan, giving strong room for inference that Lance Outram, in his capacity of keeper, neglected not his own cottage when he supplied the larder at the Castle. A modest sip of the excellent Derbyshire ale, and a tasting of the highly-seasoned hash, soon placed Deborah entirely at home with her old acquaintance.

Having put all necessary questions, and received all suitable answers, respecting the state of the neighbourhood, and such of her own friends as continued to reside there, the conversation began rather to flag, until Deborah found the art of again

renewing its interest, by communicating to her friends the dismal intelligence that they must soon look for deadly bad news from the Castle; for that her present master, Major Bridgenorth, had been summoned, by some great people from London, to assist in taking her old master, Sir Geoffrey; and that all Master Bridgenorth's servants, and several other persons whom she named, friends and adherents of the same interest, had assembled a force to surprise the Castle; and that as Sir Geoffrey was now so old, and gouty withal, it could not be expected he should make the defence he was wont; and then he was known to be so stout-hearted, that it was not to be supposed that he would yield up without stroke of sword; and then if he was killed, as he was like to be, amongst them that liked never a bone of his body, and now had him at their mercy, why, in that case, she, Dame Deborah, would look upon Lady Peveril as little better than a dead woman; and undoubtedly there would be a general mourning through all that country, where they had such great kin; and silks were like to rise on it, as Master Lutestring, the mercer of Chesterfield, was like to feel in his purse bottom. But for her part, let matters wag how they would, an if Mr Julian Peveril was to come to his own, she could give as near a guess as e'er another who was like to be Lady at Martindale.

The text of this lecture, or, in other words, the fact that Bridgenorth was gone with a party to attack Sir Geoffrey Peveril in his own Castle of Martindale, sounded so stunningly strange in the ears of those old retainers of his family, that they had no power either to attend to Mistress Deborah's inferences, or to interrupt the velocity of speech with which she poured them forth. And when at length she made a breathless pause, all that poor Dame Ellesmere could reply, was the emphatic question, "Bridgenorth brave Peveril of the Peak!—Is the woman mad?"

"Come, come, dame," said Deborah, "woman me no more than I woman you. I have not been called Mistress at the head of the table for so many years, to be woman'd here by you. And for the news, it is as true as that you are sitting there in a white hood, who will wear a black one ere long."

"Lance Outram," said the old woman, "make out, if thou be'st a man, and listen about if aught stirs up at the Castle."

"If there should," said Outram, "I am even too long here;" and he caught up his cross-bow, and one or two arrows, and rushed out of the cottage.

"Well-a-day!" said Mistress Deborah, "see if my news have not frightened away Lance Outram too, whom they used to say nothing could start.

But do not take on so, dame ; for I dare say if the Castle and the lands pass to my new master, Major Bridgenorth, as it is like they will—for I have heard that he has powerful debts over the estate—you shall have my good word with him, and I promise you he is no bad man ; something precise about preaching and praying, and about the dress which one should wear, which, I must own, be- seems not a gentleman, as, to be sure, every woman knows best what becomes her. But for you, dame, that wear a prayer-book at your girdle, with your housewife-case, and never change the fashion of your white hood, I dare say he will not grudge you the little matter you need, and are not able to win.”

“ Out, sordid jade !” exclaimed Dame Ellesmere, her very flesh quivering betwixt apprehension and anger, “ and hold your peace this instant, or I will find those that shall flay the very hide from thee with dog-whips. Hast thou eat thy noble master’s bread, not only to betray his trust, and fly from his service, but would’st thou come here, like an ill-omened bird as thou art, to triumph over his downfall ?”

“ Nay, dame,” said Deborah, over whom the violence of the old woman had obtained a certain predominance ; “ it is not I that say it—only the warrant of the Parliament folks.”

“ I thought we had done with their warrants

ever since the blessed twenty-ninth of May," said the old housekeeper of Martindale Castle ; " but this I tell thee, sweetheart, that I have seen such warrants crammed, at the sword's point, down the throats of them that brought them ; and so shall this be, if there is one true man left to drink of the Dove."

As she spoke, Lance Outram re-entered the cottage. " Naunt," he said in dismay, " I doubt it is true what she says. The beacon tower is as black as my belt. No Pole-star of Peveril. What does that betoken ?"

" Death, ruin, and captivity," exclaimed old Ellesmere. " Make for the Castle, thou knave. Thrust in thy great body. Strike for the house that bred thee and fed thee ; and if thou art buried under the ruins, thou diest a man's death."

" Nay, naunt, I shall not be slack," answered Outram. " But here come folks that I warrant can tell us more on't."

One or two of the female servants, who had fled from the Castle during the alarm, now rushed in with various reports of the case ; but all agreeing that a body of armed men were in possession of the Castle, and that Major Bridgenorth had taken young Master Julian prisoner, and conveyed him down to Moultrassie-Hall, with his feet tied under the belly of the nag—a shameful sight to be seen—and he so well born and so handsome.

Lance scratched his head ; and though feeling the duty incumbent upon him as a faithful servant, which was indeed specially dinned into him by the cries and exclamations of his aunt, he seemed not a little dubious how to conduct himself. “ I would to God, naunt,” he said at last, “ that old Whitaker were alive now, with his long stories about Marston-moor and Edge-hill, that made us all yawn our jaws off their hinges, in spite of broiled rashers and double-beer ! When a man is missed, he is moaned, as they say ; and I would rather than a broad-piece he had been here to have sorted this matter, for it is clean out of my way as a woodsman, that have no skill of war. But dang it, if old Sir Geoffrey go to the wall without a knock for it !—Here you, Nell—(speaking to one of the fugitive maidens from the Castle)—but, no—you have not the heart of a cat, and are afraid of your own shadow by moonlight—But, Cis, you are a stout-hearted wench, and know a buck from a bulfinch. Hark thee, Cis, as you would wish to be married, get up to the Castle again, and get thee in—thou best knowest where—for thou hast oft gotten out of postern to a dance, or junketting, to my knowledge—Get thee back to the Castle, as ye hope to be married—See my lady—they cannot hinder thee of that—my lady has a head worth twenty of ours—If I am to gather force, light up the beacon for a signal ; and spare not a

tar barrel on't. Thou may'st do it safe enough. I warrant the Roundheads busy with drink and plunder.—And, hark thee, say to my lady I am gone down to the miners' houses at Bonadventure. The rogues were mutinying for their wages but yesterday ; they will be all ready for good or bad. Let her send orders down to me ; or do you come yourself, your legs are long enough."

" Whether they are or not, Master Lance, (and you know nothing of the matter,) they shall do your errand to-night, for love of the old Knight and his lady."

So Cisly Sellok, a kind of Derbyshire Camilla, who had won the smock at the foot-race at Ashbourne, sprung forward towards the Castle, with a speed which few could have equalled.

" There goes a mettled wench," said Lance ; " and now, naunt, give me the old broadsword—it is above the bed-head—and my wood-knife ; and I shall do well enough."

" And what is to become of me ?" bleated the unfortunate Mistress Deborah Debbitch.

" You must remain here with my aunt, Mistress Deb ; and, for old acquaintance' sake, she will take care no harm befalls you ; but take heed how you attempt to break bounds."

So saying, and pondering in his own mind the task which he had undertaken, the hardy forester strode down the moonlight glade, scarcely hearing

the blessings and cautions which Dame Ellesmere kept showering after him. His thoughts were not altogether warlike. "What a tight ankle the jade hath!—she trips it like a doe in summer over the dew. Well, but here are the huts—Let us to this gear.—Are ye all asleep, ye dammers, sinkers, and drift-drivers? turn out, ye subterranean badgers. Here is your master, Sir Geoffrey, dead, for aught you know or care. Do not you see the beacon is unlit, and you sit there like so many asses?"

"Why," answered one of the miners, who now began to come out of their huts,

"An he be dead,
He will eat no more bread."

"And you are like to eat none neither," said Lance; "for the works will be presently stopped, and all of you turned off."

"Well, and what of it, Master Lance? As good play for nought as work for nought. Here is four weeks we have scarce seen the colour of Sir Geoffrey's coin; and you ask us to care whether he be dead or in life! For you, that goes about, trotting upon your horse, and doing for work what all men do for pleasure, it may be well enough; but it is another matter to be leaving God's light, and burrowing all day and night in darkness, like a toad in a hole—that's not to be done for nought, I trow; and if Sir Geoffrey is dead, his soul will suffer

for't ; and if he's alive, we'll have him in the Bar-moot Court."

" Hark ye, Gaffer," said Lance, " and take notice, my mates, all of you," for a considerable number of these rude and subterranean people had now assembled to hear the discussion—" Has Sir Geoffrey, think you, ever put a penny in his pouch out of this same Bonadventure mine ?"

" I cannot say as I think he has," answered old Ditchley, the party who maintained the controversy.

" Answer on your conscience, though it be but a leaden one, Do not you know that he hath lost a good penny ?"

" Why, I believe he may," said Gaffer Ditchley. " What then ?—lose to-day, win to-morrow—the miner must eat in the meantime."

" True ; but what will you eat when Master Bridgenorth gets the land, that will not hear of a mine being wrought on his own ground ? Will he work on at dead loss, think ye ?" demanded trusty Lance.

" Bridgenorth ?—he of Moultrassie-Hall, that stopped the great Felicity Work, on which his father laid out, some say, ten thousand pounds, and never got in a penny ? Why, what has he to do with Sir Geoffrey's property down here at Bonadventure ? It was never his, I trow."

" Nay, what do I know ?" answered Lance, who

saw the impression he had made. "Law and debt will give him half Derbyshire, I think, unless you stand by old Sir Geoffrey."

"But if Sir Geoffrey be dead," said Ditchley, cautiously, "what good will our standing by do to him?"

"I did not say he was dead, but only as bad as dead; in the hands of the Roundheads—a prisoner up yonder, at his own Castle," said Lance; "and will have his head cut off, like the good Earl of Derby's, at Bolton-le-Moors."

"Nay, then, comrades," said Gaffer Ditchley, "an it be as Master Lance says, I think we should bear a hand for stout old Sir Geoffrey, against a low-born mean-spirited fellow like Bridgenorth, who shut up a shaft had cost thousands, without getting a penny profit on't. So hurra for Sir Geoffrey, and down with the Rump! But hold ye a blink—hold—(and the waving of his hand stopped the commencing cheer)—Hark ye, Master Lance, it must be all over, for the beacon is as black as night; and you know yourself that marks the Lord's death."

"It will kindle again in an instant," said Lance; internally adding, "I pray to God it may!—It will kindle in an instant—lack of fuel, and the confusion of the family."

"Ay, like enow, like enow," said Ditchley; "but I winna budge till I see it blazing."

“Why then, there a goes !” said Lance. “Thank thee, Cis—thank thee, my good wench.—Believe your own eyes, my lads, if you will not believe me ; and now hurra for Peveril of the Peak—the King and his friends—and down with Rumps and Roundheads !”

The sudden rekindling of the beacon had all the effect which Lance could have desired upon the minds of his rude and ignorant hearers, who, in their superstitious humour, had strongly associated the Polar-star of Peveril with the fortunes of the family. Once moved, according to the national character of their countrymen, they soon became enthusiastic ; and Lance found himself at the head of thirty stout fellows and upwards, armed with their pick-axes, and ready to execute whatever task he should impose on them.

Trusting to enter the Castle by the postern, which had served to accommodate himself and other domestics upon an emergency, his only anxiety was to keep his march silent ; and he earnestly recommended to his followers to reserve their shouts for the moment of the attack. They had not advanced far on their road to the Castle, when Cisly Sellok met them, so breathless with haste, that the poor girl was obliged to throw herself into Master Lance’s arms.

“Stand up, my mettled wench,” said he, giving

her a sly kiss at the same time, "and let us know what is going on up at the Castle."

"My lady bids you, as you would serve God and your master, not to come up to the Castle, which can but make bloodshed; for she says Sir Geoffrey is lawfully in hand, and that he must bide the issue; and that he is innocent of what he is charged with, and is going up to speak for himself before King and Council, and she goes up with him. And besides, they have found out the postern, the roundhead rogues; for two of them saw me when I went out of door, and chased me; but I shewed them a fair pair of heels."

"As ever dashed dew from the cowslip," said Lance. "But what the foul fiend is to be done? for if they have secured the postern, I know not how the dickens we can get in."

"All is fastened with bolt and staple, and guarded with gun and pistol, at the Castle," quoth Cisly; "and so sharp are they, that they nigh caught me coming with my lady's message, as I told you. But my lady says, if you could deliver her son, Master Julian, from Bridgenorth, that she would hold it good service."

"What!" said Lance, "is young master at the Castle? I taught him to shoot his first shaft. But how to get in!"

"He was at the Castle in the midst of the ruffle, but old Bridgenorth has carried him down prison-

er to the Hall," answered Cisly. " There was never faith nor courtesy in an old Puritan, who never had pipe and tabor in his house since it was built."

" Or who stopped a promising mine," said Ditchley, " to save a few thousand pounds, when he might have made himself as rich as the Lord of Chatsworth, and fed a hundred good fellows all the whilst."

" Why, then," said Lance, " since you are all of a mind, we will go draw the cover for the old badger ; and I promise you that the Hall is not like one of your real houses of quality, where the walls are as thick as whinstone-dikes, but foolish brickwork, that your pick-axes will work through as if it were cheese. Huzza once more for Peveril of the Peak ! down with Bridgenorth, and all upstart euckoldy Roundheads !"

Having indulged the throats of his followers with one buxom huzza, Lance commanded them to cease their clamours, and proceeded to conduct them, by such paths as seemed the least likely to be watched, to the court-yard of Moultrassie-Hall. On the road they were joined by several stout yeomen farmers, either followers of the Peveril family, or friends to the High Church and Cavalier party ; most of whom, alarmed by the news which began to fly fast through the neighbourhood, were armed with sword and pistol.

Lance Outram halted his party, at the distance, as he himself described it, of a flight-shot from the house, and advanced alone, and in silence, to reconnoitre ; and having previously commanded Ditchley and his subterranean allies to come to his assistance whenever he should whistle, he crept cautiously forward, and soon found that those whom he came to surprise, true to the discipline which had gained their party such decided superiority during the Civil War, had posted a sentinel, who paced through the court-yard, piously chaunting a psalm-tune, while his arms, crossed on his bosom, supported a gun of formidable length.

“ Now, a true soldier,” said Lance Outram to himself, “ would put stop to thy snivelling ditty, by making a broad arrow quiver in your heart, and no great alarm given. But, dang it, I have not the right spirit for a soldier—I cannot fight a man till my blood’s up ; and for shooting him from behind a wall, it is cruelly like to stalking a deer. I’ll e’en face him, and try what to make of him.”

With this doughty resolution, and taking no further care to conceal himself, he entered the court-yard boldly, and was making forward to the front door of the Hall, as a matter of course. But the old Cromwellian, who was on guard, had not so learned his duty. “ Who goes there ?—Stand, friend—stand ; or, verily, I will shoot thee to

death!" were challenges which followed each other quick, the last being enforced by the levelling and presenting the said long-barrelled gun with which he was armed.

"Why, what a murrain!" answered Lance. "Is it your fashion to go a shooting at this time o' night? Why, this is but a time for bat-fowling."

"Nay, but hark thee, friend," said the experienced sentinel, "I am none of those who do this work negligently. Thou canst not snare me with thy crafty speech, though thou would'st make it to sound simple in mine ear. Of a verity I will shoot, unless thou tell thy name and business."

"Name!" said Lance; "why, what a dickens should it be but Robin Round—honest Robin of Redham; and for business, an you must needs know, I come on a message from some Parliament man, up yonder at the Castle, with letters for worshipful Master Bridgenorth of Moultrassie-Hall; and this be the place, as I think; though why ye be marching up and down at his door, like the sign of the Red Man, with your old fire-lock there, I cannot so well guess."

"Give me the letters, my friend," said the sentinel, to whom this explanation seemed very natural and probable, "and I will cause them forthwith to be delivered into his worship's own hand."

Rummaging in his pockets, as if to pull out the

letters which never existed, Master Lance approached within the sentinel's piece, and, before he was aware, suddenly seized him by the collar, whistled sharp and shrill, and exerting his skill as a wrestler, for which he had been distinguished in his youth, he stretched his antagonist on his back—the musket for which they struggled going off in the fall.

The miners rushed into the court-yard at Lance's signal ; and hopeless any longer of prosecuting his design in silence, Lance commanded two of them to secure the prisoner, and the rest to cheer loudly, and attack the door of the house. Instantly the court-yard of the mansion rung with the cry of "Peveril of the Peak for ever !" with all the abuse which the Royalists had invented to cast upon the Roundheads during so many years of contention ; and at the same time, while some assailed the door with their mining implements, others directed their attack against the angle, where a kind of porch joined to the main front of the building ; and there, in some degree protected by the projection of the wall, and of a balcony which overhung the porch, wrought in more security, as well as with more effect, than the others ; for the doors being of oak, thickly studded with nails, offered a more effectual resistance to violence than the brick-work.

The noise of this hubbub on the outside, soon excited wild alarm and tumult within. Lights flew

from window to window, and voices were heard demanding the cause of the tumult ; to which the party cries of those who were in the court-yard afforded a sufficient, or at least the only answer, which was vouchsafed. At length the window of a projecting staircase opened, and the voice of Bridgenorth himself demanded authoritatively what the tumult meant, and commanded the rioters to desist, upon their own proper and immediate peril.

“ We want our young master, you canting old thief,” was the reply ; “ and if we have him not instantly, the topmost stone of your house shall lie as low as the foundation.”

“ We will try that presently,” said Bridgenorth ; “ for if there is another blow stricken against the walls of my peaceful house, I will fire my carabine among you, and your blood be upon your own head. I have a score of friends, well armed with musket and pistol, to defend my house ; and we have both the means and heart, with Heaven’s assistance, to repay any violence you can offer.”

“ Master Bridgenorth,” replied Lance, who, though no soldier, was sportsman enough to comprehend the advantage which those under cover, and using fire-arms, must necessarily have over his party, exposed to their aim, in a great measure, and without means of answering their fire,—“ Master Bridgenorth, let us crave parley with you, and fair conditions. We desire to do you no evil, but will

have back our young master ; it is enough that you have got our old one and his lady. It is foul chasing to kill hart, hind, and fawn ; and we will give you some light on the subject in an instant."

This speech was followed by a great crash amongst the lower windows of the house, according to a new species of attack which had been suggested by some of the assailants.

"I would take the honest fellow's word, and let young Peveril go," said one of the garrison, who, carelessly yawning, approached on the inside the post at which Bridgenorth had stationed himself.

"Are you mad?" said Bridgenorth ; "or do you think me poor enough in spirit to give up the advantages I now possess over the family of Peveril, for the awe of a parcel of boors, whom the first discharge will scatter like chaff before the whirlwind?"

"Nay," answered the speaker, who was the same individual who had struck Julian by his resemblance to the man who called himself Ganlesse, "I love a dire revenge, but we shall buy it somewhat too dear if these rascals set the house on fire, as they are like to do, while you are parleying from the window. They have thrown torches or firebrands into the hall ; and it is all our friends can do to keep the flame from catching the wainscoting, which is old and dry."

"Now, may heaven judge thee for thy light-

ness of spirit," answered Bridgenorth ; " one would think mischief was so properly thy element, that to thee it was indifferent whether friend or foe was the sufferer."

So saying, he ran hastily down stairs towards the hall, into which, through broken casements, and betwixt the iron bars, which prevented human entrance, the assailants had thrust lighted straw, sufficient to excite much smoke and some fire, and to throw the defenders of the house into great confusion ; insomuch, that of several shots fired hastily from the windows, little or no damage followed to the besiegers, who, getting warm in the onset, answered the hostile charges with loud shouts of " Peveril for ever !" and had already made a practicable breach through the brick-wall of the tenement, through which Lance, Ditchley, and several of the most adventurous among their followers, made their way into the hall.

The complete capture of the house remained, however, as far off as ever. The defenders mixed with much coolness and skill, that solemn and deep spirit of enthusiasm which sets life at less than nothing, in comparison to real or supposed duty. From the half-opened doors which led into the hall, they maintained a fire which began to grow fatal. One miner was shot dead ; three or four were wounded ; and Lance scarce knew whether he should draw his forces from the house, and

leave it a prey to the flames, or, making a desperate attack on the posts occupied by the defenders, try to obtain unmolested possession of the place. At this moment his course of conduct was determined by an unexpected occurrence, of which it is necessary to trace the cause.

Julian Peveril had been, like other inhabitants of Moultrassie-Hall on that momentous night, awakened by the report of the sentinel's musket, followed by the shouts of his father's vassals and followers ; of which he collected enough to guess that Bridgenorth's house was attacked with a view to his liberation. Very doubtful of the issue of such an attempt, dizzy with the slumber from which he had been so suddenly awakened, and confounded with the rapid succession of events to which he had been lately a witness, he hastily put on a part of his clothes, and hastened to the window of his apartment. From this he could see nothing to relieve his anxiety, for it looked towards a quarter different from that on which the attack was made. He attempted his door ; it was locked on the outside ; and his perplexity and anxiety became extreme, when suddenly the lock was turned, and in an undress, hastily assumed in the moment of alarm, her hair streaming on her shoulders, her eyes gleaming betwixt fear and resolution, Alice Bridgenorth rushed into his apartment, and seized

his hand with the fervent exclamation, "Julian, save my father!"

The light which she bore in her hand served to shew those features which could rarely have been viewed by any one without emotion, but which bore an expression irresistible to a lover.

"Alice," he said, "what means this? What is the danger? Where is your father?"

"Do not stay to question," she answered; "but if you would save him, follow me."

At the same time she led the way, with great speed, half way down the turret staircase which led to his room, thence turning through a side door, along a long gallery, to a larger and wider stair, at the bottom of which stood her father, surrounded by four or five of his friends, scarce discernible through the smoke of the fire which began to take in the hall, as well as that which arose from the repeated discharge of their own fire-arms.

Julian saw there was not a moment to be lost, if he meant to be a successful mediator. He rushed through Bridgenorth's party ere they were aware of his approach, and throwing himself amongst the assailants who occupied the hall in considerable numbers, he assured them of his personal safety, and conjured them to depart.

"Not without a few more slices at the Rump, master," answered Lance. "I am principally glad to see you safe and well; but here is Joe Rimegap

shot as dead as a buck in season, and more of us are hurt ; and we'll have revenge, and roast the Puritans like apples for lamb's-wool !”

“ Then you shall roast me along with them,” said Julian ; “ for I vow to God, I will not leave the hall, being bound by parole of honour to abide with Major Bridgenorth till lawfully dismissed.”

“ Now out on you, an you were ten times a Peveril !” said Ditchley ; “ to give so many honest fellows loss and labour on your behalf, and to shew them no kinder countenance.—I say, beet up the fire, and burn all together !”

“ Nay, nay ; but peace, my masters, and hearken to reason,” said Julian ; “ we are all here in evil condition, and you will only make it worse by contention. Do you help to put out this same fire, which will else cost us all dear. Keep yourselves under arms. Let Master Bridgenorth and me settle some grounds of accommodation, and I trust all will be favourably made up on both sides ; and if not, you shall have my consent and countenance to fight it out ; and come on it what will, I will never forget this night's good service.”

He then drew Ditchley and Lance Outram aside, while the rest stood suspended at his appearance and words, and expressing the utmost thanks and gratitude for what they had already done, urged them, as the greatest favour which they could do towards him and his father's house, to permit him

to negotiate the terms of his emancipation from thralldom ; at the same time, forcing on Ditchley five or six gold pieces, that the brave lads of Bon-adventure might drink his health ; whilst to Lance he expressed the warmest sense of his active kindness, but protested he could only consider it as good service to his house, if he was allowed to manage the matter after his own fashion.

“ Why,” answered Lance, “ I am well out on it, Master Julian ; for it is matter beyond my mastery. All that I stand to is, that I will see you safe out of this same Moultrassie-Hall ; for our old Naunt Ellesmere will else give me but cold comfort when I come home. Truth is, I began unwillingly ; but when I saw the poor fellow Joe shot beside me, why, I thought we should have some amends. But I put it all in your Honour’s hands.”

During this colloquy both parties had been amicably employed in extinguishing the fire, which might otherwise have been fatal to all. It required a general effort to get it under ; and both parties agreed on the necessary labour, with as much unanimity, as if the water they brought in leathern buckets from the well to throw upon the fire, had had some effect in slaking their mutual hostility.

CHAP. VIII.

Necessity—thou best of peace-makers,
As well as surest prompter of invention—
Help us to composition.

Anonymous.

WHILE the fire continued, the two parties laboured in active union, like the jarring factions of the Jews during the siege of Jerusalem, when compelled to unite in resisting an assault of the besiegers. But when the last bucket of water had hissed on the few embers that continued to glimmer—when the sense of mutual hostility, hitherto suspended by a feeling of common danger, was in its turn rekindled—the parties, mingled as they had hitherto been in one common exertion, drew off from each other, and began to arrange themselves at opposite sides of the hall, and handle their weapons, as if for a renewal of the fight.

Bridgenorth interrupted any farther progress of this menaced hostility. “Julian Peveril,” he said, “thou art free to walk thine own path, since thou wilt not walk with me that road which is more

safe, as well as more honourable. But if you do by my counsel, you will get soon beyond the British seas."

"Ralph Bridgenorth," said one of his friends, "this is but evil and feeble conduct on thine own part. Wilt thou withhold thy hand from the battle, to defend, from these sons of Belial, the captive of thy bow and of thy spear? Surely we are enow to deal with them in the security of our good old cause; nor should we part with this spawn of the old serpent, until we essay whether the Lord will not give us victory therein."

A hum of stern assent followed; and had not Ganlesse now interfered, the combat would probably have been renewed. He took the advocate for war apart into one of the window recesses, and apparently satisfied his objections; for as he returned to his companions, he said to them, "Our friend hath so well argued this matter, that, verily, since he is of the same mind with the worthy Major Bridgenorth, I think the youth may be set at liberty."

As no further objection was offered, it only remained with Julian to thank and reward those who had been active in his assistance. Having first obtained from Bridgenorth a promise of indemnity to them for the riot they had committed, a few kind words conveyed his sense of their services; and some broad pieces, thrust into the hand of

Lance Outram, furnished the means for affording them a holiday. They would have remained to protect him, but, fearful of farther disorder, and relying entirely on the good faith of Major Bridgenorth, he dismissed them all excepting Lance, whom he detained to attend upon him for a few minutes, till he should depart from Moultrassie. But ere leaving the Hall, he could not repress his desire to speak with Bridgenorth in secret; and advancing towards him, he expressed such a desire.

Tacitly granting what was asked of him, Bridgenorth led the way to a small summer saloon adjoining to the Hall, where, with his usual gravity and indifference of manner, he seemed to await in silence what Peveril had to communicate.

Julian found it difficult, where so little opening was afforded him, to find a tone in which to open the subjects he had at heart, that should be at once dignified and conciliating. "Major Bridgenorth," he said at length, "you have been a son, and an affectionate one—You may conceive my present anxiety—My father!—What has been designed for him?"

"What the law will," answered Bridgenorth. "Had he walked by the counsels which I procured to be given to him, he might have dwelt safely in the house of his ancestors. His fate is now beyond

my control—far beyond yours. It must be with him as his country shall decide.”

“ And my mother ?” said Peveril.

“ Will consult, as she has ever done, her own duty ; and create her own happiness by doing so,” replied Bridgenorth. “ Believe, my designs towards your family are better than they may seem through the mist which adversity has spread around your house. I may triumph as a man ; but as a man I must also remember, in my hour, that mine enemies have had theirs.—Have you aught else to say ?” he added, after a momentary pause. “ You have rejected once, yea and again, the hand I stretched out to you. Methinks little more remains between us.”

These words, which seemed to cut short farther discussion, were calmly spoken ; so that though they appeared to discourage farther question, they could not interrupt that which still trembled on Julian’s tongue. He made a step or two towards the door ; then suddenly returned. “ Your daughter ?” he said—“ Major Bridgenorth—I should ask—I *do* ask forgiveness for mentioning her name—but may I not inquire after her ?—May I not express my wishes for her future happiness ?”

“ Your interest in her is but too flattering,” said Bridgenorth ; “ but you have already chosen your part ; and you must be, in future, strangers to each

other. I may have wished it otherwise, but the hour of grace is passed, during which your compliance with my advice might—I will speak it plainly—have led to your union. For her happiness—if such a word belongs to a mortal pilgrimage—I shall care for it sufficiently. She leaves this place to-day, under the guardianship of a sure friend.”

“Not of——” exclaimed Peveril, and stopped short; for he felt he had no right to pronounce the name which came to his lips.

“Why do you pause?” said Bridgenorth; “a sudden thought is often a wise, almost always an honest one. With whom did you suppose I meant to intrust my child, that the idea called forth so anxious an expression?”

“Again I should ask your forgiveness,” said Julian, “for meddling where I have little right to interfere. But I saw a face here that is known to me—the person calls himself Ganlesse—Is it with him that you mean to intrust your daughter?”

“Even to the person who calls himself Ganlesse,” said Bridgenorth, without expressing either anger or surprise.

“And do you know to whom you commit a charge so precious to all who know her, and so dear to yourself?” said Julian.

“Do *you* know, who ask me the question?” answered Bridgenorth.

“I own I do not,” answered Julian; “but I have seen him in a character so different from what he now wears, that I feel it my duty to warn you, how you intrust the charge of your child to one who can alternately play the profligate or the hypocrite, as it suits his own interest or humour.”

Bridgenorth smiled contemptuously. “I might be angry,” he said, “with the officious zeal which supposes that its green conceptions can instruct my grey hairs; but, good Julian, I do but only ask from you the liberal construction, that I, who have had much converse with mankind, know with whom I trust what is dearest to me. He of whom thou speakest, hath one visage to his friends, though he may have others to the world, living amongst those before whom honest features should be concealed under a grotesque vizard; even as in the sinful sports of the day, called maskings and mummeries, where the wise, if he shew himself at all, must be contented to play the apish and fantastic fool.”

“I would only pray your wisdom to beware,” said Julian, “of one, who, as he has a vizard for others, may also have one which can disguise his real features from you yourself.”

“This is being over careful, young man,” replied Bridgenorth, more shortly than he had hither-

to spoken ; “ if you would walk by my counsel, you will attend to your own affairs, which, credit me, deserve all your care, and leave others to the management of theirs.”

This was too plain to be misunderstood ; and Peveril was compelled to take his leave of Bridgenorth, and of Moultrassie-Hall, without farther parley or explanation. The reader may imagine how oft he looked back, and tried to guess, amongst the lights which continued to twinkle in various parts of the building, which sparkle it was that gleamed from the bower of Alice. When the road turned into another direction, he sunk into a deep reverie, from which he was at length roused by the voice of Lance, who demanded where he intended to quarter for the night. He was unprepared to answer the question, but the honest keeper himself prompted a solution of the problem, by requesting that he would occupy a spare bed in the Lodge ; to which Julian willingly agreed. The rest of the inhabitants were retired to rest when they entered ; but Dame Ellesmere, apprized by a messenger of her nephew's hospitable intent, had everything in the best readiness she could, for the son of her ancient patron. Peveril betook himself to rest ; and, notwithstanding so many subjects of anxiety, slept soundly till the morning was far advanced.

His slumbers were first broken by Lance, who

had been long up, and already active in his service. He informed him, that his horse, arms, and small cloak-bag, had been sent from the Castle by one of Major Bridgenorth's servants, who brought a letter, discharging from the Major's service the unfortunate Deborah Debbitch, and prohibiting her return to the Hall. The officer of the House of Commons, escorted by a strong guard, had left Martindale Castle that morning early, travelling in Sir Geoffrey's carriage—his lady being also permitted to attend on him. To this he had to add, that the property at the Castle was taken possession of by Master Win-the-fight, the attorney, from Chesterfield, with other officers of law, in name of Major Bridgenorth, a large creditor of the unfortunate knight.

Having told these Job's tidings, Lance paused ; and after a moment's hesitation, declared he was resolved to quit the country, and go up to London along with his young master. Julian argued the point with him ; and insisted he had better stay to take charge of his aunt, in case she should be disturbed by these strangers. Lance replied, " She would have one with her, who would protect her well enough ; for there was wherewithal to buy protection amongst them. But for himself, he was resolved to follow Master Julian to the death."

Julian heartily thanked him for his love.

" Nay, it is not altogether out of love neither,"

said Lance, "though I am as loving as another ; but it is, as it were, partly out of fear lest I be called over the coals for last night's matter ; for as for the miners, they will never trouble them, as the creatures only act after their kind."

"I will write in your behalf to Major Bridgenorth, who is bound to afford you protection, if you have such fear," said Julian.

"Nay, for that matter, it is not altogether fear, more than altogether love," answered the enigmatical keeper ; "although it hath a tasting of both in it. And, to speak plain truth, thus it is—Dame Debbitch and Naunt Ellesmere have resolved to set up their horses together, and have made up all their quarrels. And of all ghosts in the world, the worst is, when an old true-love comes back to haunt a poor fellow like me. Mistress Deborah, though distressed enow for the loss of her place, has been already speaking of a broken sixpence, or some such token, as if a man could remember such things for so many years, even if she had not gone over seas, like a woodcock, in the meanwhile."

Julian could scarce forbear laughing. "I thought you too much of a man, Lance, to fear a woman marrying you whether you would or no."

"It has been many an honest man's luck, for all that," said Lance ; "and a woman in the very house has so many deuced opportunities. And then there would be two upon one ; for Naunt,

though high enough when any of *your* folks are concerned, hath some look to the main chance ; and it seems Mistress Deb is as rich as a Jew."

" And you, Lance," said Juliàn, " have no mind to marry for cake and pudding."

" No, truly, master," answered Lance, " unless I knew what dough they were baked on. How the devil do I know how the jade came by so much ? And then if she speaks of tokens and love-passages, let her be the same tight lass I broke the sixpence with, and I will be the same true lad to her. But I never heard of true love lasting ten years ; and hers, if it lives at all, must be nearer twenty."

" Well, then, Lance," said Julian, " since you are resolved on the thing, we will go to London together ; where, if I cannot retain you in my service, and if my father recovers not these misfortunes, I will endeavour to promote you elsewhere."

" Nay, nay," said Lance, " I trust to be back to bonny Martindale before it is long, and to keep the greenwood, as I have been wont to do ; for, as to Dame Debbitch, when they have not me for their common butt, Naunt and she will soon bend bows on each other. So here comes old Dame Ellesmere with your breakfast. I will but give some directions about the deer to Rough Ralph, my helper, and saddle my forest pony, and your ho-

nour's horse, which is no prime one, and we will be ready to trot."

Julian was not sorry for this addition to his establishment ; for Lance had shewn himself, on the preceding evening, a shrewd and bold fellow, and attached to his master. He therefore set himself to reconcile his aunt to parting with her nephew for some time. Her unlimited devotion for "the family," readily induced the old lady to acquiesce in his proposal, though not without a gentle sigh over the ruins of a castle in the air, which was founded on the well-saved purse of Mistress Deborah Debbitch. "At any rate," she thought, "it was as well that Lance should be out of the way of that bold, long-legged, beggarly trollop, Cis Sellok." But to poor Deb herself, the expatriation of Lance, whom she had looked to as a sailor to a port under his lee, for which he can run, if weather becomes foul, was a second severe blow, following close on her dismissal from the profitable service of Major Bridgenorth.

Julian visited the disconsolate damsel, in hopes of gaining some light upon Bridgenorth's projects regarding his daughter—the character of this Ganlesse—and other matters, with which her residence in the family might have made her acquainted ; but he found her by far too much troubled in mind to afford him the least information. The name of Ganlesse she did not seem to recollect—that of

Alice rendered her hysterical—that of Bridgenorth, furious. She numbered up the various services she had rendered in the family—and denounced the plague of swartness to the linen—of leanness to the poultry—of dearth and dishonour to the house-keeping—and of lingering sickness and early death to Alice ;—all which evils, she averred, had only been kept off by her continued, watchful, and incessant cares.—Then again turning to the subject of the fugitive Lance, she expressed such a total contempt of that mean-spirited fellow, in a tone between laughing and crying, as satisfied Julian it was not a topic likely to act as a sedative ; and that, therefore, unless he made a longer stay than the urgent state of his affairs permitted, he was not likely to find Mistress Deborah in such a state of composure as might enable him to obtain from her any rational or useful information.

Lance, who good-naturedly took upon himself the whole burthen of Dame Debbitch's mental alienation, or "taking on," as such fits of *passio hysterica* are usually termed in the country, had too much feeling to produce himself before the victim of her own sensibility, and of his obduracy. He therefore intimated to Julian, by his assistant Ralph, that the horses stood saddled behind the Lodge, and that all was ready for their departure.

Julian took the hint, and they were soon mount-

ed, and clearing the road, at a rapid trot, in the direction of London ; but not by the most usual road. Julian calculated that the carriage in which his father was transported would travel slowly ; and it was his purpose, if possible, to get to London before it should arrive there, in order to have time to consult with the friends of his family, what measures should be taken in his father's behalf.

In this manner, they advanced a day's journey towards London ; at the conclusion of which, Julian found his resting-place in a small inn upon the road. No one came, at the first call, to attend upon the guests and their horses, although the house was well lighted up ; and there was a prodigious chattering in the kitchen, such as can only be produced by a French cook, when his mystery is in the very moment of projection. It instantly occurred to Julian—so rare was the ministry of these Gallic artists at that time—that the clamour he heard must necessarily be produced by the *Sieur* Chaubert, on whose *plats* he had lately feasted, along with Smith and Ganlesse.

One, or both of these, were therefore probably in the little inn ; and if so, he might have some opportunity to discover their real purpose and character. How to avail himself of such a meeting, he knew not ; but chance favoured him more than he could have expected.

“ I can scarce receive you, gentlefolks,” said the landlord, who at length appeared at the door ; “ here be a sort of quality in my house to-night, whom less than all will not satisfy ; nor all neither, for that matter.”

“ We are but plain fellows, landlord,” said Julian ; “ we are bound for Moseley-market, and can get no farther to-night. Any hole will serve us, no matter what.”

“ Why,” said the honest host, “ if that be the case, I must e’en put one of you behind the bar, though the gentlemen have desired to be private ; the other must take heart of grace, and help me at the tap.”

“ The tap for me,” said Lance, without waiting his master’s decision. “ It is an element which I could live and die in.”

“ The bar, then, for me,” said Peveril ; and stepping back, whispered to Lance to exchange cloaks with him, desirous, if possible, to avoid being recognized.

The exchange was made in an instant ; and presently afterwards the landlord brought a light ; and as he guided Julian into his hostelry, cautioned him to sit quiet in the place where he should stow him ; and if he was discovered, to say that he was one of the house, and leave him to make it good. “ You will hear what the gallants say,” he added ; “ but I think thou wilt carry away but

little on it ; for when it is not French, it is Court gibberish ; and that is as hard to construe."

The bar, into which our hero was inducted on these conditions, seemed formed, with respect to the public room, upon the principle of a citadel, intended to observe and bridle a rebellious capital. Here sat the host on the Saturday evenings, screened from the observation of his guests, yet with the power of observing both their wants and their behaviour, and also that of overhearing their conversation—a practice which he was much addicted to, being one of that numerous class of philanthropists, to whom their neighbour's business is of as much consequence, or rather more, than their own.

Here he planted his new guest, with a repeated caution not to disturb the gentlemen by speech or motion ; and a promise that he should be speedily accommodated with a cold buttock of beef, and a tankard of home-brewed. And here he left him, with no other light than that which glimmered from the well-illuminated apartment within, through a sort of shuttle which accommodated the landlord with a view into it.

This situation, inconvenient enough in itself, was, on the present occasion, precisely what Julian would have selected. He wrapped himself in the weather-beaten cloak of Lance Outram, which had been stained, by age and weather, into a thousand

variations of its original Lincoln green ; and with as little noise as he could, set himself to observe the two inmates, who had engrossed to themselves the whole of the apartment, which was usually open to the public. They sat by a table, well covered with such costly rarities, as could only have been procured by much forecast, and prepared by the exquisite Mons. Chaubert; to which both seemed to do much justice.

Julian had little difficulty in ascertaining, that one of the travellers was, as he had anticipated, the master of the said Chaubert, or, as he was called by Ganlesse, Smith ; the other, who faced him, he had never seen before. This last was dressed like a gallant of the first order. His periwig, indeed, as he travelled on horseback, did not much exceed in size the bar-wig of a modern lawyer ; but then the essence which he shook from it with every motion, impregnated a whole apartment, which was usually only perfumed by that vulgar herb, tobacco. His riding-coat was laced in the newest and most courtly style ; and Grammont himself might have envied the embroidery of his waistcoat, and the peculiar cut of his breeches, which buttoned above the knee, permitting the shape of a very handsome leg to be completely seen. This, by the proprietor thereof, had been stretched out upon a stool, and he contemplated

its proportions, from time to time, with infinite satisfaction.

The conversation between these worthies was so interesting, that we propose to assign to it another chapter.

CHAP. IX.

———This is some creature of the elements,
Most like your sea-gull. He can wheel and whistle
His screaming song, e'en when the storm is loudest—
Take for his sheeted couch the restless foam
Of the wild wave-crest—slumber in the calm,
And dally with the storm. Yet 'tis a gull,
An arrant gull, with all this.

The Chieftain:

“AND here is to thee,” said the fashionable gallant whom we have described, “honest Tom; and a cup of welcome to thee out of Looby-land. Why, thou hast been so long in the country, that thou hast got a bumpkinly clod-compelling sort of look thyself. That greasy doublet fits thee as if it were thine reserved Sunday's apparel; and the points seem as if they were stay-laces bought for thy true-love Marjory. I marvel thou canst still relish a ragout. Methinks now, to a stomach bound in such a jacket, eggs and bacon were a diet more conforming.”

“Rally away, my good lord, while wit lasts,” answered his companion; “yours is not the sort of ammunition which will bear much expenditure.

Or rather, tell me news from Court, since we have met so opportunely."

"You would have asked me these an hour ago," said the lord, "had not your very soul been under Chaubert's covered dishes. You remembered King's affairs will keep cool, and *entremets* must be eaten hot."

"Not so, my lord; I only kept common talk whilst that eaves-dropping rascal of a landlord was in the room; so that, now the coast is clear once more, I pray you for news from Court."

"The Plot is non-suited," answered the courtier—"Sir George Wakeman acquitted—the witnesses discredited by the jury—Scroggs, who ranted on one side, is now ranting on t'other."

"Rat the Plot, Wakeman, witnesses, Papists and Protestants, all together! Do you think I care for such trash as that?—Till the Plot comes up the palace back-stair, and gets possession of old Rowley's own imagination, I care not a farthing who believes or disbelieves. I hang by him will bear me out."

"Well, then," said my lord, "the next news is Rochester's disgrace."

"Disgraced!—How, and for what? The morning I came off, he stood as fair as any one."

"That's over—the epitaph has broken his neck—and now he may write one for his own Court favour, for it is dead and buried."

“ The epitaph !” exclaimed Tom ; “ why, I was by when it was made ; and it passed for an excellent good jest with him whom it was made upon.”

“ Ay, so it did amongst ourselves,” answered his companion ; “ but it got abroad, and had a run like a mill-race. It was in every coffee-house, and in half the diurnals. Grammont translated it into French too ; and there is no laughing at so sharp a jest, when it is dinned into your ears on all sides. So, disgraced is the author ; and but for his Grace of Buckingham, the Court would be as dull as my Lord Chancellor’s wig.”

“ Or as the head it covers.—Well, my lord, the fewer at Court, there is the more room for those that can bustle there. But there are two main-strings of Shaftesbury’s fiddle broken—the Popish Plot fallen into discredit—and Rochester disgraced. Changeful times—but here is to the little man who shall mend them.”

“ I apprehend you,” replied his Lordship ; “ and meet your health with my love. Trust me, my lord loves you, and longs for you.—Nay, I have done you reason.—By your leave, the cup is with me. Here is to his buxom Grace of Bucks.”

“ As blithe a peer,” said Smith, “ as ever turned night to day. Nay, it shall be an overflowing bumper an you will ; and I will drink it *supernaculum*.—And how stands the great Madam ?”

“Stoutly against all change,” answered my lord—“Little Anthony can make nought of her.”

“Then he shall bring her influence to nought. Hark in thy ear. Thou knowest—” (Here he whispered so low that Julian could not catch the sound.)

“Know him?” answered the other—“Know Ned of the Island?—To be sure I do.”

“He is the man that shall knot the great fiddle-strings that have snapped. Say I told you so; and thereupon I give thee his health.”

“And thereupon I pledge thee,” said the young nobleman, “which on any other argument I were loath to do—thinking of Ned as somewhat the cut of a villain.”

“Granted, man—granted,” said the other,—“a very thorough-paced rascal; but able, my lord, able and necessary; and, in this plan, indispensable. Pshaw!—This champagne turns stronger as it gets older, I think.”

“Hark, mine honest fellow,” said the courtier; “I would thou would’st give me some item of all this misery. Thou hast it, I know; for whom do men intrust but trusty Chiffinch?”

“It is your pleasure to say so, my lord,” answered Smith, (whom we shall hereafter call by his real name of Chiffinch,) with much drunken gravity, for his speech had become a little altered by his copious libations in the course of the evening,

—“few men know more, or say less, than I do ; and it well becomes my station. *Conticuere omnes*, as the grammar hath it—all men should learn to hold their tongue.”

“Excepting with a friend, Tom—excepting with a friend. Thou wilt never be such a dog-bolt to refuse a hint to a friend ? Come, you get too wise and statesman-like for your office—The ligatures of thy most peasantly jacket there are like to burst with thy secret. Come, undo a button, man ; it is for the health of thy constitution—Let out a reef ; and let thy chosen friend know what is meditating. Thou knowest I am as true as thyself to little Anthony, if he can but get uppermost.”

“*If*, thou lordly infidel !” said Chiffinch—“talk’st thou to me of *ifs* ?—There, is neither *if* nor *and* in the matter. The great Madam shall be pulled a peg down—the great Plot screwed a peg or two up. Thou knowest Ned ?—Honest Ned had a brother’s death to revenge.”

“I have heard so,” said the nobleman ; “and that his persevering resentment of that injury was one of the few points which seemed to be a sort of heathenish virtue in him.”

“Well,” continued Chiffinch, “in manœuvring to bring about this revenge, which he hath laboured at many a day, he hath discovered a treasure.”

“What!—In the Isle of Man?” said his companion.

“Assure yourself of it.—She is a creature so lovely, that she needs but be seen to put down every one of the favourites, from Portsmouth and Cleveland down to that three-penny baggage, Mistress Nelly.”

“By my word, Chiffinch,” said my lord, “that is a reinforcement after the fashion of thine own best tactics. But bethink thee, man! To make such a conquest, there wants more than a cherry-cheek and a bright eye—there must be wit—wit, man, and manners, and a little sense besides, to keep influence when it is gotten.”

“Pshaw! will you tell me what goes to this vocation?” said Chiffinch. “Here, pledge me her health in a brimmer.—Nay, you shall do it on knees too.—Never such a triumphant beauty was seen—I went to church on purpose, for the first time these ten years—Yet I lie, it was not to church neither—it was to chapel.”

“To chapel!—What the devil, is she a Puritan?” exclaimed the other courtier.

“To be sure she is. Do you think I would be accessory to bringing a Papist into favour in these times, when, as my good Lord said in the House, there should not be a Popish man-servant, nor a Popish maid-servant, not so much as dog or cat, left to bark or mew about the King!”

“ But consider, Chiffie, the dislikelihoood of her pleasing,” said the noble courtier.—“ What ! old Rowley, with his wit, and love of wit—his wildness, and love of wildness—he form a league with a silly, scrupulous, unidea’d Puritan !—Not if she were Venus.”

“ Thou knowest nought of the matter,” answered Chiffinch. “ I tell thee, the fine contrast between the seeming saint and falling sinner will give zest to the old gentleman’s inclinations. If I do not know him, who does ?—His health, my lord, on your bare knee, as you would live to be of the bed-chamber.”

“ I pledge you most devoutly,” answered his friend. “ But you have not told me how the acquaintance is to be made ; for you cannot, I think, carry her to Whitehall.”

“ Aha, my dear lord, you would have the whole secret ! but that I cannot afford—I can spare a friend a peep at my ends, but no one must look on the means by which they are achieved.”—So saying, he shook his drunken head most wisely.

The villainous design which this discourse implied, and which his heart told him was designed against Alice Bridgenorth, stirred Julian so extremely, that he involuntarily shifted his posture, and laid his hand on his sword hilt.

Chiffinch heard a rustling, and broke off, ex-

claiming, "Hark!—Zounds, something moved—I trust I have told the tale to no ears but thine."

"I will cut off any which have drunk in but a syllable of thy words," said the nobleman; and raising a candle, he took a hasty survey of the apartment. Seeing nothing that could incur his menaced resentment, he replaced the light and continued:—"Well, suppose the Belle Louise de Querouaille shoots from her high station in the firmament, how will you rear up the down-fallen Plot again—for without that same Plot, think of it as thou wilt, we have no change of hands—and matters remain as they were, with a Protestant courtesan instead of a Papist—Little Anthony can but little speed without that Plot of his—I believe, in my conscience, he begot it himself."

"Whoever begot it, he hath adopted it; and a thriving babe it has been to him. Well, then, though it lies out of my way, I will play Saint Peter again—up with t'other key, and unlock t'other mystery."

"Now thou speakest like a good fellow; and I will, with my own hands, unwire this fresh flask, to begin a brimmer to the success of thy achievement."

"Well, then," continued the communicative Chiffinch, "thou knowest that they have long had a nibbling at the old Countess of Derby.—So Ned was sent down—he owes her an old accompt, thou

knowest—with private instructions to possess himself of the island, if he could, by help of some of his old friends. He hath ever kept up spies upon her ; and happy man was he, to think his hour of vengeance was come so nigh. But he missed his blow ; and the old girl, being placed on her guard, was soon in a condition to make Ned smoke for it. Out of the island he came with little advantage for having entered it ; when, by some means—for the devil, I think, stands ever his friend—he obtained information concerning a messenger, whom her old Majesty of Man had sent to London to make party in her behalf. Ned stuck himself to this fellow—a raw, half-bred lad, son of an old blundering Cavalier of the old stamp, down in Derbyshire—and so managed the swain, that he brought him to the place where I was waiting, in anxious expectation of the pretty one I told you of. By Saint Anthony, for I will swear no meaner oath, I stared when I saw this great lout—not that the fellow is so ill-looking neither—I stared like—like—good now, help me to a simile.”

“ Like Saint Anthony’s pig, an it were sleek,” said the young lord ; “ your eyes, Chiffie, have the very blink of one. But what hath all this to do with the Plot. Hold—I have had wine enough.”

“ You shall not baulk me,” said Chiffinch ; and a jingling was heard, as if he were filling his comrade’s glass with a very unsteady hand. “ Hey

—What the devil is the matter?—I used to carry my glass steady—very steady.”

“ Well, but this stranger?”

“ Why, he swept at game and ragout as he would at spring beef or summer mutton. Never so unnurtured a cub—Knew no more what he eat than an infidel—I cursed him by my gods when I saw Chaubert’s chef-d’œuvres glutted down so indifferent a throat. We took the freedom to spice his goblet a little, and ease him of his packet of letters; and the fool went on his way the next morning with a budget artificially filled with grey paper. Ned would have kept him, in hopes to have made a witness of him, but the boy was not of that mettle.”

“ How will you prove your letters?” said the courtier.

“ La you there, my lord,” said Chiffinch; “ one may see with half an eye, for all your laced doublet, that you have been of the family of Furnival’s, before your brother’s death sent you to Court. How prove the letters?—Why, we have but let the sparrow fly with a string round his foot—We have him again so soon as we list.”

“ Why, thou art turned a very Machiavel, Chiffinch,” said his friend. “ But how if the youth proved restiff?—I have heard these Peak men have hot heads and hard hands.”

“ Trouble not yourself—that was cared for, my

lord," said Chiffinch—"his pistols might bark, but they could not bite."

"Most exquisite Chiffinch, thou art turned micher as well as padder—Canst both rob a man and kidnap him?"

"Micher and padder—what terms be these?" said Chiffinch. "Methinks these are sounds to lug out upon. You will have me angry to the degree of falling foul—robber and kidnapper!"

"You mistake verb for noun-substantive," replied his lordship; "I said *rob* and *kidnap*—a man may do either once and away without being professional."

"But not without spilling a little foolish noble blood, or some such red-coloured gear," said Chiffinch, starting up.

"Oh yes," said his lordship; "all this may be without these direful consequences, and so you will find to-morrow, when you return to England; for at present you are in the land of Champagne, Chiffie; and that you may continue so, I drink thee this parting cup to line thy night-cap."

"I do not refuse your pledge," said Chiffinch; "but I drink to thee in dudgeon and in hostility—It is a cup of wrath, and a gage of battle. To-morrow, by dawn, I will have thee at point of fox, wert thou the last of the Savilles.—What the devil! think you I fear you because you are a lord?"

“Not so, Chiffinch,” answered his companion. “I know thou fearest nothing but beans and bacon, washed down with bumpkin-like beer.—Adieu, sweet Chiffinch—to bed—Chiffinch—to bed.”

So saying, he lifted a candle, and left the apartment. And Chiffinch, whom the last draught had nearly overpowered, had just strength enough left to do the same, muttering, as he staggered out, “Yes, he shall answer it—Dawn of day—D—n me.—It is come already—Yonder’s the dawn—No, d—n me, ’tis the fire glancing on the cursed red lattice—I am whistled drunk, I think—This comes of a country inn—It is the smell of the brandy in this cursed room—It could not be the wine—Well, old Rowley shall send me no more errands in the country again—Steady, steady.”

So saying, he reeled out of the apartment, leaving Peveril to think over the extraordinary conversation he had just heard.

The name of Chiffinch, the well-known minister of Charles’s pleasures, was nearly allied to the part which he seemed about to play in the present intrigue; but that Christian, whom he had always supposed a Puritan as strict as his brother-in-law Bridgenorth, should be associated with him in a plot so infamous, seemed alike unnatural and monstrous. The near relationship might blind Bridgenorth, and warrant him in confiding his daughter to such a man’s charge; but what a wretch he

must be, that could coolly meditate such an ignominious abuse of his trust. In doubt whether he could trust for a moment the tale which Chiffinch had revealed, he hastily examined his packet, and found that the seal-skin case in which it had been wrapt up, now only contained an equal quantity of waste paper. If he had wanted further confirmation, the failure of the shot which he had fired at Bridgenorth, and of which the wadding only struck him, shewed that his arms had been tampered with. He examined the pistol which still remained charged, and found that the ball had been drawn. "May I perish," said he to himself, "amid these villainous intrigues, but thou shalt be more surely loaded, and to better purpose! The contents of these papers may undo my benefactress—their having been found on me, may ruin my father—that I have been the bearer of them, may cost, in these fiery times, my own life—that I care least for—they form a branch of the scheme laid against the honour and happiness of a creature so innocent, that it is almost sin to think of her within the neighbourhood of such infamous knaves. I will recover the letters at all risks—But how?—that is to be thought on.—Lance is stout and trusty; and when a bold deed is once resolved upon, there never yet lacked the means of executing it."

His host now entered, with an apology for his long absence; and after providing Peveril with

some refreshments, invited him to accept, for his night-quarters, the accommodation of a remote hay-loft, which he was to share with his comrade ; professing, at the same time, he could hardly have afforded them this courtesy, but out of deference to the exquisite talents of Lance Outram, as assistant at the tap ; where, indeed, it seems probable that he, as well as the admiring landlord, did that evening contrive to drink nearly as much liquor as they drew.

But Lance was a seasoned vessel, on whom liquor made no lasting impression ; so that when Peveril awaked that trusty follower at dawn, he found him cool enough to comprehend and enter into the design which he expressed, of recovering the letters which had been abstracted from his person.

Having considered the whole matter with much attention, Lance shrugged, grinned, and scratched his head ; and at length manfully expressed his resolution. “ Well, my naunt speaks truth in her old saw,—

‘ He that serves Peveril munna be slack,
Neither for weather, nor yet for wrack.’

And then again, my good dame was wont to say, that whenever Peveril was in a broil, Outram was in a stew ; so I will never bear a base mind, but even hold a part with you, as my fathers have

done with yours, for four generations, whatever more."

"Spoken like a most gallant Outram," said Julian; "and were we but rid of that puppy lord and his retinue, we two could easily deal with the other three."

"Two Londoners and a Frenchman?" said Lance,—“I would take them in mine own hand. And as for my Lord Saville, as they call him, I heard word last night that he and all his men of gilded gingerbread—that looked at an honest fellow like me, as if they were the ore and I the dross—are all to be off this morning to some races, or such like junkettings, about Tutberry. It was that brought him down here, where he met this other civet-cat by accident.”

In truth, even as Lance spoke, a trampling was heard of horses in the yard; and from the hatch of their hay-loft, they beheld Lord Saville's attendants mustered, and ready to set out so soon as he should make his appearance.

"So ho, Master Jeremy," said one of the fellows, to a sort of principal attendant, who just came out of the house, "methinks the wine has proved a sleeping cup to my lord this morning."

"No," answered Jeremy, "he hath been up before light, writing letters for London; and to punish thy irreverence, thou, Jonathan, shalt be the man to ride back with them."

“ And so to miss the race,” said Jonathan, sulkily ; “ I thank you for this good turn, good Master Jeremy ; and hang me if I forget it.”

Further discussion was cut short by the appearance of the young nobleman, who, as he came out of the inn, said to Jeremy, “ These be the letters. Let one of the knaves ride to London for life and death, and deliver them as directed ; and the rest of them get to horse and follow me.”

Jeremy gave Jonathan the packet with a malicious smile ; and the disappointed groom turned his horse’s head sulkily towards London, while Lord Saville, and the rest of his retinue, rode briskly off in an opposite direction, pursued by the benedictions of the host and his family, who stood bowing and curtseying at the door, in gratitude, doubtless, for the receipt of an unconscionable reckoning.

It was full three hours after their departure, that Chiffinch lounged into the room in which they had supped, in a brocaded night-gown, and green velvet cap, turned up with the most costly Brussels lace. He seemed but half awake ; and it was with drowsy voice that he called for a cup of cold small beer. His manner and appearance were those of a man who had wrestled hard with Bacchus on the preceding evening, and had scarce recovered the effects of his contest with the jolly god. Lance, instructed by his master to watch the motions of

the courtier, officiously attended with the cooling beverage he called for, pleading, as an excuse to the landlord, his wish to see a Londoner in his morning gown and cap.

No sooner had Chiffinch taken his morning draught, than he inquired after Lord Saville.

“His lordship was mounted and away by peep of dawn,” was Lance’s reply.

“What the devil!” exclaimed Chiffinch; “why, this is scarce civil.—What! off for the races with his whole retinue?”

“All but one,” replied Lance, “whom his lordship sent back to London with letters.”

“To London with letters!” said Chiffinch. “Why, I am for London, and could have saved his express a labour.—But stop—hold—I begin to recollect—d——n, can I have blabbed?—I have—I have—I remember it all now—I have blabbed; and to the very weazel of the Court, who sucks the yolk out of every man’s secret. Furies and fire—that my afternoons should ruin my mornings thus!—I must turn boon companion and good fellow in my cups—and have my confidences and my quarrels—my friends and my enemies, with a plague to me, as if any one could do a man much good or harm but his own self. His messenger must be stopped though—I will put a spoke in his wheel.—Hark ye, drawer-fellow—call my groom hither—call Tom Beacon.”

Lance obeyed ; but failed not, when he had introduced the domestic, to remain in the apartment, in order to hear what should pass betwixt him and his master.

“ Hark ye, Tom,” said Chiffinch, “ here are five pieces for you.”

“ What’s to be done now, I trow ?” said Tom, without even the ceremony of returning thanks, which he was probably well aware would not be received even in part payment of the debt he was incurring.

“ Mount your fleet nag, Tom—ride like the devil—overtake the groom whom Lord Saville dispatched to London this morning—lame his horse—break his bones—fill him as drunk as the Baltic sea ; or do whatever may best and most effectually stop his journey.—Why does the lout stand there without answering me ? Doest understand me ?”

“ Why, ay, Master Chiffinch,” said Tom ; “ and so I am thinking doth this honest man here, who need not have heard quite so much of your counsel, an it had been your will.”

“ I am bewitched this morning,” said Chiffinch to himself, “ or else the champagne runs in my head still. My brain has become the very lowlands of Holland—a gill-cup would inundate it.—Hark thee, fellow,” he added, addressing Lance, “ keep my counsel—there is a wager betwixt Lord

Saville and me, which of us shall first have a letter in London. Here is to drink my health, and luck on my side. Say nothing of it; but help Tom to his nag.—Tom, ere thou startest, come for thy credentials—I will give thee a letter to the Duke of Bucks, that may be evidence thou wert first in town.”

Tom Beacon ducked and exit; and Lance, after having made some show of helping him to horse, ran back to tell his master the joyful intelligence, that a lucky accident had abated Chiffinch’s party to their own number.

Peveril immediately ordered his horses to be got ready; and, so soon as Tom Beacon was dispatched towards London on a rapid trot, had the satisfaction to observe Chiffinch, with his favourite Chaubert, mount to pursue the same journey, though at a more moderate rate. He permitted them to attain such a distance, that they might be dogged without suspicion; then paid his reckoning, mounted his horse, and followed, keeping his men carefully in view, until he should come to a place proper for the enterprize which he meditated.

It had been Peveril’s intention, that when they came to some solitary part of the road, they should gradually mend their pace, until they overtook Chaubert—that Lance Outram should then drop behind, in order to assail the man of spits and stoves, while he himself, spurring onward, should

grapple with Chiffinch. But this scheme presupposed that the master and servant should travel in the usual manner—the latter riding a few yards behind the former. Whereas, such and so interesting were the subjects of discussion betwixt Chiffinch and the French cook, that, without heeding the rules of etiquette, they rode on together, amicably abreast, carrying on a conversation on the mysteries of the table, which the ancient Comus, or a modern gastronome, might have listened to with pleasure. It was, therefore, necessary to venture on them both at once.

For this purpose, when they saw a long tract of road before them, unvaried by the least appearance of man, beast, or human habitation, they began to mend their pace, that they might come up to Chiffinch, without giving him any alarm, by a sudden and suspicious increase of haste. In this manner, they lessened the distance which separated them till they were within about twenty yards, when Peveril, afraid that Chiffinch might recognize him at a nearer approach, and so trust to his horse's heels, made Lance the signal to charge.

At the sudden increase of their speed, and the noise with which it was necessarily attended, Chiffinch looked around, but had time to do no more, for Lance, who had pricked his pony (which was much more speedy than Julian's horse) into full gallop, pushed, without ceremony, betwixt the

courtier and his attendant ; and ere Chaubert had time for more than one exclamation, he upset both horse and Frenchman ; *mortbleu !* thrilling from his tongue as he rolled on the ground amongst the various articles of his occupation, which, escaping from the budget in which he bore them, lay tumbled upon the highway in strange disorder ; while Lance, springing from his palfrey, commanded his foeman to be still, under no less a penalty than that of death, if he attempted to rise.

Before Chiffinch could avenge his trusty follower's downfall, his own bridle was seized by Julian, who presented a pistol with the other hand, and commanded him to stand or die.

Chiffinch, though effeminate, was no coward. He stood still as commanded, and said, with firmness, "Rogue, you have taken me at surprise. If you are a highwayman, there is my purse. Do us no bodily harm, and spare the budget of spices and sauces."

"Look you, Master Chiffinch," said Peveril, "this is no time for dallying. I am no highwayman, but a man of honour. Give me back that packet which you stole from me the other night ; or, by all that is good, I will send a brace of balls through you, and search for it at leisure."

"What night?—What packet?" answered Chiffinch, confused ; yet willing to protract the time for the chance of assistance, or to put Peveril off

his guard. "I know nothing of what you mean. If you are a man of honour, let me draw my sword, and I will do you right, as a gentleman should do to another."

"Dishonourable rascal!" said Peveril, "you escape not in this manner. You plundered me when you had me at odds; and I am not the fool to let my advantage escape, now that my turn is come. Yield up the packet; and then, if you will, I will fight you on equal terms. But first," he reiterated, "yield up the packet, or I will instantly send you where the tenor of your life will be hard to answer for."

The tone of Peveril's voice, the fierceness of his eye, and the manner in which he held the loaded weapon, within a hand's-breadth of Chiffinch's head, convinced the last there was neither room for compromise, nor time for trifling. He thrust his hand into a side-pocket of his cloak, and with visible reluctance, produced those papers and dispatches with which Julian had been intrusted by the Countess of Derby.

"They are five in number," said Julian; "and you have given me only four. Your life depends on full restitution."

"It escaped from my hand," said Chiffinch, producing the missing document—"There it is. Now, sir, your pleasure is fulfilled, unless," he added,

sulkily, "you design either murder or farther robbery."

"Base wretch !" said Peveril, withdrawing his pistol, yet keeping a watchful eye on Chiffinch's motions, "thou art unworthy any honest man's sword ; and yet, if you dare draw your own, as you proposed but now, I am willing to give you a chance upon fair equality of terms."

"Equality !" said Chiffinch, sneeringly ; "yes, a proper equality—sword and pistol against single rapier, and two men upon one, for Chaubert is no fighter. No, sir ; I shall seek amends upon some more fitting occasion, and with more equal weapons."

"By back-biting, or by poison, base pander," said Julian ; "these are thy means of vengeance. But mark me—I know your vile purpose respecting a lady who is too worthy that her name should be uttered in such a worthless ear. Thou hast done me one injury, and thou see'st I have repaid it. But prosecute this farther villainy, and be assured I will put thee to death like a foul reptile, whose very slaver is fatal to humanity. Rely upon this, as if Machiavel had sworn it ; for so sure as you keep your purpose, so surely will I prosecute my revenge.—Follow me, Lance, and leave him to think on what I have told him."

Lance had, after the first shock, sustained a very easy part in this rencontre ; for all he had to do,

was to point the butt of his whip, in the manner of a gun, at the intimidated Frenchman, who, lying on his back, and gazing at random on the skies, had as little the power or purpose of resistance, as any pig which had ever come under his own slaughter-knife.

Summoned by his master from the easy duty of guarding such an unresisting prisoner, Lance remounted his horse, and they both rode off, leaving their discomfited antagonists to console themselves for their misadventure as they best could. But consolation was hard to come by in the circumstances. The French artist had to lament the dispersion of his spices, and the destruction of his magazine of sauces—an enchanter despoiled of his magic wand and talisman, could scarce have been in more desperate extremity. Chiffinch had to mourn the downfall of his intrigue, and its premature discovery. “To this fellow, at least,” he thought, “I can have bragged none—here my evil genius alone has betrayed me. With this infernal discovery, which may cost me so dear on all hands, champagne had nought to do. If there be a flask left unbroken, I will drink it after dinner, and try if it may not even yet suggest some scheme of redemption and of revenge.”

With this manly resolution, he prosecuted his journey to London.

CHAP. X.

A man so various, that he seem'd to be
Not one, but all mankind's epitome ;
Stiff in opinions—always in the wrong—
Was everything by starts, but nothing long ;
Who, in the course of one revolving moon,
Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon ;
Then, all for women, painting, fiddling, drinking ;
Besides a thousand freaks that died in thinking.

DRYDEN.

WE must now transport the reader to the magnificent hotel in ——— Street, inhabited at this time by the celebrated George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, whom Dryden has doomed to a painful immortality by the few lines which we have prefixed to this chapter. Amid the gay and the licentious of the laughing Court of Charles, the Duke was the most licentious and most gay ; yet, while expending a princely fortune, a strong constitution, and excellent talents, in pursuit of frivolous pleasures, he failed not to nourish deeper and more extensive designs ; in which he only failed from want of that fixed purpose and regulated per-

severance essential to all important enterprizes, but particularly in politics.

It was long past noon ; and the usual hour of the Duke's levee—if anything could be termed usual where all was irregular—had been long past. His hall was filled with lacqueys and footmen, in the most splendid liveries ; the interior apartments, with the gentlemen and pages of his household, arrayed as persons of the first quality, and, in that respect, rather exceeding than falling short of the Duke in personal splendour. But his antichamber, in particular, might be compared to a gathering of eagles to the slaughter, were not the simile too dignified to express that vile race, who, by a hundred devices all tending to one common end, live upon the wants of needy greatness, or administer to the pleasures of summer-teeming luxury, or stimulate the wild wishes of lavish and wasteful extravagance, by devising new modes and fresh motives of profusion. There stood the Projector, with his mysterious brow, promising unbounded wealth to whomsoever might choose to furnish the small preliminary sum necessary to change egg-shells into the great *arcanum*. There was Captain Seagull, undertaker for a foreign settlement, with the map under his arm of Indian or American kingdoms, beautiful as the primitive Eden, waiting the bold occupants, for whom a generous patron should equip two brigantines and a

fly-boat. Thither came, fast and frequent, the gamesters, in their different forms and calling. This, light, young, gay in appearance, the thoughtless youth of wit and pleasure—the pigeon rather than the rook—but at heart the same sly, shrewd, cold-blooded calculator, as yonder old hard-featured professor of the same science, whose eyes are grown dim with watching the dice at midnight ; and whose fingers are even now assisting his mental computation of chances and of odds. The fine arts, too—I would it were otherwise—have their professors amongst this sordid train. The poor poet, half ashamed, in spite of habit, of the part which he is about to perform, and abashed by consciousness at once of his base motive and his shabby black-coat, lurks in yonder corner for the favourable moment to offer his dedication. Much better attired, the architect presents his splendid vision of front and wings, and designs a palace, the expense of which may transfer the employer to a jail. But uppermost of all, the favourite musician, or singer, who waits on my lord to receive, in solid gold, the value of the dulcet sounds which solaced the banquet of the preceding evening.

Such, and many such like, were the morning attendants of the Duke of Buckingham—all genuine descendants of the daughter of the horse-leech, whose cry is “ Give, give.”

But the levee of his Grace contained other and

very different characters ; and was indeed as various as his own opinions and pursuits. Besides many of the young nobility and wealthy gentry of England, who made his Grace the glass at which they dressed themselves for the day, and who learned from him how to travel, with the newest and best grace, the general Road to Ruin ; there were others of a graver character—discarded statesmen, political spies, opposition orators, servile tools of administration, men who met not elsewhere, but who regarded the Duke's mansion as a sort of neutral ground ; sure, that if he was not of their opinion to-day, the very circumstance rendered it most likely he should think with them to-morrow. The Puritans themselves did not shun intercourse with a man whose talents must have rendered him formidable, even if they had not been united with high rank and an immense fortune. Several grave personages, with black suits, short cloaks, and bandstrings of a formal cut, were mingled, as we see their portraits in a gallery of paintings, among the gallants who ruffled in silk and embroidery. It is true, they escaped the scandal of being supposed intimates of the Duke, by their business being supposed to refer to money matters. Whether these grave and professing citizens mixed politics with money-lending, was not known ; but it had been long observed, that the Jews, who in general confine themselves to the latter department, had

become for some time faithful attendants at the Duke's levee.

It was high-tide in the anti-chamber, and had been so for more than an hour, ere the Duke's gentleman in ordinary ventured into his bed-chamber, carefully darkened, so as to make midnight at noon-day, to know his Grace's pleasure. His soft and serene whisper, in which he asked whether it were his Grace's pleasure to rise, was briefly and sharply answered by the counter questions, "Who waits?—What's o'clock?"

"It is Jerningham, your Grace," said the attendant. "It is one afternoon; and your Grace appointed some of the people without at eleven."

"Who are they?—What do they want?"

"A message from Whitehall, your Grace."

"Pshaw! it will keep cold. Those who make all others wait, will be the better of waiting in their turn. Were I to be guilty of ill-breeding, it should rather be to a King than a beggar."

"The gentlemen from the city."

"I am tired of them—tired of their all cant, and no religion—all Protestantism, and no charity. Tell them to go to Shaftesbury—to Aldersgate Street with them—that's the best market for their wares."

"Jockey, my lord, from Newmarket."

"Let him ride to the devil—he has horse of mine, and spurs of his own. Any more?"

“ The whole anti-chamber is full, my lord—knights and squires, doctors and dicers.”

“ The dicers, with the doctors in their pockets, I presume.”

“ Counts, captains, and clergymen.”

“ You are alliterative, Jerningham,” said the Duke ; “ and that is a proof you are poetical. Hand me my writing things.”

Getting half out of bed—thrusting one arm into a brocade night-gown, deeply furred with sables, and one foot into a velvet slipper, while the other pressed in primitive nudity the rich carpet—his Grace, without thinking farther on the assembly without, began to pen a few lines of a satirical poem ; then suddenly stopped—threw the pen into the chimney—exclaimed that the humour was past—and asked his attendant if there were any letters. Jerningham produced a huge packet.

“ What the devil !” said his Grace, “ do you think I will read all these ? I am like Clarence, who asked a cup of wine, and was soused into a butt of sack. I mean is there anything which presses ?”

“ This letter, your Grace,” said Jerningham, “ concerning the Yorkshire mortgage.”

“ Did I not bid thee carry it to old Gatheral, my steward ?”

“ I did, my lord,” answered the other ; “ but Gatheral says there are difficulties.”

“ Let the usurers foreclose, then—there is no difficulty in that ; and out of a hundred manors I shall scarce miss one,” answered the Duke. “ And hark ye, bring me my chocolate.”

“ Nay, my lord, Gatheral does not say it is impossible—only difficult.”

“ And what is the use of him, if he cannot make it easy ? But you are all born to make difficulties,” replied the Duke.

“ Nay, if your Grace approves the terms in this schedule, and pleases to sign it, Gatheral will undertake for the matter,” answered Jerningham.

“ And could you not have said so at first, you blockhead,” said the Duke, signing the paper without looking at the contents—“ What other letters ? And remember, I must be plagued with no more business.”

“ Billets-doux, my lord—five or six of them. This left at the porter’s-lodge by a vizard mask.”

“ Pshaw !” answered the Duke, tossing him over, while his attendant assisted in dressing him—“ an acquaintance of a quarter’s standing.”

“ This given to one of the pages by my Lady ——’s waiting-woman.”

“ Plague on it—a Jeremiade on the subject of perjury and treachery, and not a single new line to the old tune,” said the Duke, glancing over the billet. “ Here is the old cant—*cruel man—broken vows—Heaven’s just revenge*. Why, the woman

is thinking of murder—not of love. No one should pretend to write upon so threadbare a topic without having at least some novelty of expression. *The despairing Araminta*—Lie there, fair desperate. And this—how comes it?”

“Flung into the window of the hall, by a fellow who ran off at full speed,” answered Jerningham.

“This is a better text,” said the Duke; “and yet it is an old one too—three weeks old at least—The little Countess with the jealous Lord—I should not care a farthing for her, save for that same jealous lord—Plague on’t, and he’s gone down to the country—*this evening—in silence and safety—written with a quill pulled from the wing of Cupid*—Your ladyship has left him pen-feathers enough to fly away with—better clipped his wings when you had caught him, my lady—And so confident of her *Buckingham’s faith*—I hate confidence in a young person—She must be taught better—I will not go.”

“Your Grace will not be so cruel,” said Jerningham.

“Thou art a compassionate fellow, Jerningham; but conceit must be punished.”

“But if your Lordship should resume your fancy for her?”

“Why, then, you must swear the billet-doux miscarried,” answered the Duke. “And stay, a

thought strikes me—it shall miscarry in great style. Hark ye—Is—what is the fellow's name—the poet—is he yonder ?”

“ There are six gentlemen, sir, who, from the reams of paper in their pocket, and the threadbare seams at their elbows, appear to wear the livery of the Muses.”

“ Poetical once more, Jerningham. He, I mean, who wrote the last lampoon,” said the Duke.

“ To whom your Grace said you owed five pieces and a beating,” replied Jerningham.

“ The money for his satire, and the cudgel for his praise—Good—Find him, give him the five pieces, and thrust the Countess's billet-doux—Hold—take Araminta's and the rest of them—thrust them all into his portfolio—All will come out at the Wits' Coffee-house ; and if the promulgator be not cudgelled into all the colours of the rainbow, there is no spite in woman, no faith in crabtree, or pith in heart of oak—Araminta's wrath alone would overburthen one pair of mortal shoulders.”

“ But, my Lord Duke,” said his attendant, “ this Settle is so dull a rascal, that nothing he can write will take.”

“ Then as we have given him steel to head the arrow,” said the Duke, “ we will give him wings to waft it with—wood, he has enough of his own to make a shaft or bolt of. Hand me my own un-

finished lampoon—give it to him with the letters—let him make what he can of them all.”

“ My Lord Duke—I crave pardon—but your Grace’s style will be discovered ; and though the ladies’ names are not at the letters, yet they will be traced.”

“ I would have it so, you blockhead. Have you lived with me so long, and cannot discover that the eclat of an intrigue is, with me, worth all the rest of it ?”

“ But the danger, my Lord Duke ?” replied Jerningham. “ There are husbands, brothers, friends, whose revenge may be awakened.”

“ And beaten to sleep again,” said Buckingham, haughtily. “ I have Black Will and his cudgel for plebeian grumblers ; and those of quality I can deal with myself. I lack breathing and exercise of late.”

“ But yet your Grace——”

“ Hold your peace, fool ! I tell you that your poor dwarfish spirit cannot measure the scope of mine. I tell thee I would have the course of my life a torrent—I am weary of easy achievements, and wish for obstacles, that I can sweep before my irresistible course.”

Another gentleman now entered the apartment. “ I humbly crave your Grace’s pardon,” he said ; “ but Master Christian is so importunate for ad-

mission instantly, that I am obliged to take your Grace's pleasure."

"Tell him to call three hours hence. Damn his politic pate, that would make all men dance after his pipe!"

"I thank you for the compliment, my Lord Duke," said Christian, entering the apartment in somewhat a more courtly garb, but with the same unpretending and undistinguished mien, and in the same placid and indifferent manner with which he had accosted Julian Peveril upon different occasions during his journey to London. "It is precisely my present object to pipe to you; and you may dance to your own profit, if you will."

"On my word, Master Christian," said the Duke, haughtily, "the affair should be weighty, that removes ceremony so entirely from betwixt us. If it relates to the subject of our last conversation, I must request our interview be postponed to some further opportunity. I am engaged in an affair of some weight." Then turning his back on Christian, he went on with his conversation with Jerningham. "Find the person you wot of, and give him the papers; and hark ye, give him this gold to pay for the shaft of his arrow—the steel-head and peacock's wing we have already provided."

"This is all well, my lord," said Christian, calmly, and taking his seat at the same time in an easy-

chair at some distance ; “ but your Grace’s levity is no match for my equanimity. It is necessary I should speak with you ; and I will await your Grace’s leisure in this apartment.”

“ *Very* well, sir,” said the Duke, peevishly ; “ if an evil is to be undergone, the sooner it is over the better—I can take measures to prevent its being renewed. So let me hear your errand without further delay.”

“ I will wait till your Grace’s toilette is completed,” said Christian, with the indifferent tone which was natural to him. “ What I have to say must be between ourselves.”

“ Begone, Jerningham ; and remain without till I call. Leave my doublet on the couch.—How now ? I have worn this cloth of silver a hundred times.”

“ Only twice, if it please your Grace,” replied Jerningham.

“ As well twenty times—keep it for yourself, or give it to my valet, if you are too proud of your gentility.”

“ Your Grace has made better men than me wear your cast clothes,” said Jerningham, submissively.

“ Thou art sharp, Jerningham,” said the Duke —“ in one sense I have, and I may again. So now, that pearl-coloured thing will do with the ribbon and George. Get away with thee.—And now that

he is gone, Master Christian, may I once more crave your pleasure?"

"My Lord Duke," said Christian, "you are a worshipper of difficulties in state affairs, as in love matters."

"I trust you have been no eaves-dropper, Master Christian," replied the Duke; "it scarce argues the respect due to me, or to my roof."

"I know not what you mean, my lord," replied Christian.

"Nay, I care not if the whole world heard what I said but now to Jerningham.—But to the matter," replied the Duke of Buckingham.

"Your Grace is so much occupied with conquests over the fair and over the witty, that you have perhaps forgotten what a stake you have in the little Island of Man."

"Not a whit, Master Christian. I remember well enough that my roundheaded father-in-law, Fairfax, had the island from the Long Parliament; and was ass enough to quit hold of it at the Restoration, when, if he had closed his clutches, and held fast, like a true bird of prey, as he should have done, he might have kept it for him and his. It had been a rare thing to have had a little kingdom—made laws of my own—had my Chancellor with seals and mace—I would have taught Jerningham, in half a day, to look as wise, walk as stiffly, and speak as sillily, as Harry Bennet."

“ You might have done this, and more, if it had pleased your Grace.”

“ Ay, and if it had pleased my Grace, thou, Ned Christian, should'st have been the Jack Ketch of my dominions.”

“ *I* your Jack Ketch, my lord ?” said Christian, more in a tone of surprise than of displeasure.

“ Why, ay ; thou hast been perpetually intriguing against the life of yonder poor old woman. It were a kingdom to thee to gratify thy spleen with thy own hands.”

“ I only seek justice against the Countess,” said Christian.

“ And the end of justice is always a gibbet,” said the Duke.

“ Be it so,” answered Christian. “ Well, the Countess is in the Plot.”

“ The devil confound the Plot, as I believe he first invented it,” said the Duke of Buckingham ; “ I have heard of nothing else for months. If one must go to hell, I would it were by some new road, and in gentlemen's company. I should not like to travel with Oates, Bedlow, and the rest of that famous cloud of witnesses.”

“ Your Grace is then resolved to forego all the advantages which may arise ? If the House of Derby fall under forfeiture, the grant to Fairfax, now worthily represented by your Duchess, re-

vives ; and you become the Lord and Sovereign of Man."

" In right of a woman," said the Duke ; " but, in troth, my godly dame owes me some advantage for having lived the first year of our marriage with her and old Black Tom, her grim, fighting, puritanic father. A man might as well have married the Devil's daughter, and set up house-keeping with his father-in-law."

" I understand you are willing, then, to join your interest for a heave at the house of Derby, my Lord Duke ?"

" As they are unlawfully possessed of my wife's kingdom, they certainly can expect no favour at my hand. But thou knowest there is an interest at Whitehall predominant over mine."

" That is only by your Grace's sufferance," said Christian.

" No, no ; I tell thee a hundred times, no," said the Duke, rousing himself to anger at the recollection. " I tell thee that base courtezan, the Duchess of Portsmouth, hath impudently set herself to thwart and contradict me ; and Charles has given me both cloudy looks and hard words before the Court. I would he could but guess what is the offence between her and me ! I would he but knew that ! But I will have her plumes plucked, or my name is not Villiers. A worthless French

fille-de-joie to brave me thus!—Christian, thou art right ; there is no passion so spirit-stirring as revenge. I will patronize the Plot, if it be but to spite her, and make it impossible for the King to uphold her.”

As the Duke spoke, he gradually wrought himself into a passion, and traversed the apartment with as much vehemence as if the only object he had on earth was to deprive the Duchess of her power and favour with the King. Christian smiled internally to see him approaching the state of mind in which he was most easily worked upon, and judiciously kept silence, until the Duke called out to him in a pet, “ Well, Sir Oracle, you that have laid so many schemes to supplant this she-wolf of Gaul, where are all your contrivances now? —Where is the exquisite beauty who was to catch the Sovereign’s eye at the first glance?—Chiffinch, hath he seen her?—and what does he say, that exquisite critic in beauty and blanc-mange, women and wine?”

“ He has *seen* and approves, but has not yet heard her ; and her speech answers to all the rest. We came here yesterday ; and to-day I intend to introduce Chiffinch to her, the instant he arrives from the country ; and I expect him every hour. I am but afraid of the damsel’s peevish virtue, for she hath been brought up after the fashion of our grandmothers—our mothers had better sense.”

“ What ! so fair, so young, so quick-witted, and so difficult ?” said the Duke. “ By your leave, you shall introduce me as well as Chiffinch.”

“ That your Grace may cure her of her intractable modesty ?” said Christian.

“ Why, it will but teach her to stand in her own light. Kings do not love to court and sue ; they should have their game run down for them.”

“ Under your Grace’s favour,” said Christian, “ this cannot be—*Non omnibus dormio*—Your Grace knows the classic allusion. If this maiden become a Prince’s favourite, rank gilds the shame and the sin. But to any under Majesty, she must not vail topsail.”

“ Why, thou suspicious fool, I was but in jest,” said the Duke. “ Do you think I would interfere to spoil a plan so much to my own advantage as that which you have laid before me ?”

Christian smiled and shook his head. “ My lord,” he said, “ I know your Grace as well, or better, perhaps, than you know yourself. To spoil a well-concerted intrigue by some cross stroke of your own, would give you more pleasure, than to bring it to a successful termination according to the plans of others. But Shaftesbury, and all concerned, have determined that our scheme shall at least have fair play. We reckon, therefore, on your help ; and—forgive me when I say so—we will

not permit ourselves to be impeded by your levity and fickleness of purpose."

"Who?—I light and fickle of purpose?" said the Duke. "You see me here as resolved as any of you, to dispossess the mistress, and to carry on the Plot; these are the only two things I live for in this world. No one can play the man of business like me, when I please, to the very filing and labelling of my letters. I am regular as a scrivener."

"You have Chiffinch's letter from the country; he told me he had written to you about some passages betwixt him and the young Lord Saville."

"He did so—he did so," said the Duke, looking among his letters; "but I see not his letter just now—I scarcely noted the contents—I was busy when it came—but I have it safely."

"You should have acted on it. The fool suffered himself to be choused out of his secret, and prayed you to see that my lord's messenger got not to the Duchess with some dispatches which he sent up from Derbyshire, betraying our mystery."

The Duke was now alarmed, and rang the bell hastily. Jerningham appeared. "Where is the letter I had from Master Chiffinch some hours since?"

"If it be not amongst those your Grace has before you, I know nothing of it," said Jerningham. "I saw none such arrive."

“ You lie, you rascal,” said Buckingham ; “ have you a right to remember better than I do ? ”

“ If your Grace will forgive me reminding you, you have scarce opened a letter this week,” said his gentleman.

“ Did you ever hear such a provoking rascal ? ” said the Duke. “ He might be a witness in the Plot. He has knocked my character for regularity entirely on the head with his damned counter-evidence.”

“ Your Grace’s talent and capacity will at least remain unimpeached,” said Christian ; “ and it is those that must serve yourself and your friends. If I might advise, you will hasten to Court, and lay some foundation for the impression we wish to make. If your Grace can take the first word, and throw out a hint to crossbite Saville, it will be well. But above all, keep the King’s ear employed, which no one can do so well as you. Leave Chiffinch to fill his heart with a proper object. Another thing is, there is a blockheadly old Cavalier, who must needs be a bustler in the Countess of Derby’s behalf—he is fast in hold, with the whole tribe of witnesses at his haunches.”

“ Nay, then, take him, Topham.”

“ Topham has taken him already, my lord,” said Christian ; “ and there is, besides, a young gallant, a son of the said Knight, who was bred in the household of the Countess of Derby, and who

has brought letters from her to the Provincial of the Jesuits, and others in London."

"What are their names?" said the Duke, dryly.

"Sir Geoffrey Peveril of Martindale Castle, in Derbyshire, and his son Julian."

"What! Peveril of the Peak?" said the Duke,—"a stout old Cavalier as ever swore an oath—A Worcester-man too—and in truth a man of all work, when blows were going. I will not consent to his ruin, Christian. These fellows must be flogged off such false scents—flogged, in every sense, they must, and will be, when the nation comes to their eye-sight again."

"It is of more than the last importance, in the meantime, to the furtherance of our plan," said Christian, "that your Grace should stand for a space between them and the King's favour. The youth hath influence with the maiden, which we should find scarce favourable to our views; besides, her father holds him as high as he can any one who is no such puritanic fool as himself."

"Well, most Christian Christian," said the Duke, "I have heard your commands at length. I will endeavour to stop the earths under the throne, that neither the lord, knight, nor squire in question, will find it possible to burrow there. For the fair one, I must leave Chiffinch and you to manage her introduction to her high destinies, since I am

not to be trusted. Adieu, most Christian Christian."

He fixed his eyes on him, and then exclaimed, as he shut the door of the apartment,—“ Most profligate and damnable villain ! And what provokes me most of all, is the knave’s composed insolence. Your Grace will do this—and your Grace will condescend to do that—A pretty puppet I should be, to play the second part, or rather the third, in such a scheme ! No, they shall all walk according to my purpose, or I will cross them. I will find this girl out in spite of them, and judge if their scheme is like to be successful. If so, she shall be mine—mine entirely, before she becomes the King’s ; and I will command her who is to guide Charles.—Jerningham, (his gentleman re-entered,) cause Christian to be dogged wherever he goes, for the next four-and-twenty hours, and find out where he visits a female newly come to town.—You smile, you knave ?”

“ I did but suspect a fresh rival to Araminta and the little Countess,” said Jerningham.

“ Away to your business, knave,” said the Duke, “ and let me think of mine.—To subdue a Puritan in Esse—a King’s favourite in Posse—the very muster of western beauties—that is point first. The impudence of this Manx mongrel to be corrected—the pride of Madame la Duchesse to be

pulled down—an important state intrigue to be furthered, or baffled, as circumstances render most to my own honour and glory—I wished for business but now, and I have got enough of it. But Buckingham will keep his own steerage-way through shoal and through weather.”

CHAP. XI.

———— Mark you this, Bassanio——

The devil can quote scripture for his purpose.

Merchant of Venice.

AFTER leaving the proud mansion of the Duke of Buckingham, Christian, full of the deep and treacherous schemes which he meditated, hastened to the city, where, in a decent inn, kept by a person of his own persuasion, he had been unexpectedly summoned to meet with Ralph Bridge-north of Moultrassie. He was not disappointed—the Major had arrived that morning, and anxiously expected him. The usual gloom of his countenance was darkened into a yet deeper shade of anxiety, which was scarcely even relieved, while, in answer to his inquiry after his daughter, Christian gave the most favourable account of her health and spirits, naturally and unaffectedly intermingled with such praises of her beauty and her disposition, as were likely to be most grateful to a father's ear.

But Christian had too much cunning to expatiate on this theme, however soothing. He stopped short exactly at the point where, as an affectionate relative, he might be supposed to have said enough. "The lady," he said, "with whom he had placed Alice, was delighted with her aspect and manners, and undertook to be responsible for her health and happiness. He had not, he said, deserved so little confidence at the hand of his brother, Bridgenorth, as that the Major should, contrary to his purpose, and to the plan which they had adjusted together, have hurried up from the country, as if his own presence were necessary for Alice's protection."

"Brother Christian," said Bridgenorth in reply, "I must see my child—I must see this person with whom she is intrusted."

"To what purpose?" answered Christian. "Have you not often confessed that the over excess of the carnal affection which you have entertained for your daughter, hath been a snare to you?—Have you not, more than once, been on the point of resigning those great designs which should place righteousness as a counsellor beside the throne, because you desired to gratify your daughter's girlish passion for this descendant of your old persecutor—this Julian Peveril?"

"I own it," said Bridgenorth; "and worlds would I have given, and would yet give, to clasp

that youth to my bosom, and call him my son. The spirit of his mother looks from his eye, and his stately step is as that of his father, when he daily spoke comfort to me in my distress, and said, ‘ The child liveth.’ ”

“ But the youth walks,” said Christian, “ after his own lights, and mistakes the meteor of the marsh for the Polar star. Ralph Bridgenorth, I will speak to thee in friendly sincerity. Thou must not think to serve both the good cause and Baal. Obey, if thou wilt, thine own carnal affections, summon this Julian Peveril to thy house, and let him wed thy daughter—But mark the reception he will meet with from the proud old knight, whose spirit is now, even now, as little broken with his chains, as after the sword of the Saints had prevailed at Worcester. See thy daughter spurned from his feet like an outcast.”

“ Christian,” said Bridgenorth, interrupting him, “ thou doest urge me hard ; but thou doest it in love, my brother, and I forgive thee—Alice shall never be spurned.—But this friend of thine—this lady—thou art my child’s uncle ; and after me, thou art next to her in love and affection—Still, thou art not her father—hast not her father’s fears. Art thou sure of the character of this woman to whom my child is intrusted ?”

“ Am I sure of my own ?—Am I sure that my name is Christian, yours Bridgenorth ?—Have I

not dwelt for many years in this city?—Do I not know this Court?—And am I likely to be imposed upon? For I will not think you can fear my imposing upon you.”

“Thou art my brother,” said Bridgenorth—“the blood and bone of my departed Saint—and I am determined that I will trust thee in this matter.”

“Thou doest well,” said Christian; “and who knows what reward may be in store for thee?—I cannot look upon Alice, but it is strongly borne in on my mind, that there will be work for a creature so excellent beyond ordinary women. Courageous Judith freed Bethulia by her valour, and the comely features of Esther made her a safeguard and a defence to her people in the land of captivity, when she found favour in the sight of King Ahasuerus.”

“Be it with her as Heaven wills,” said Bridgenorth; “and now tell me what progress there is in the great work.”

“The people are weary of the iniquity of this Court,” said Christian; “and if this man will continue to reign, it must be by calling to his councils men of another stamp. The alarm excited by the damnable practices of the Papists, has called up men’s souls, and awakened their eyes, to the dangers of their state. He himself—for he will give up brother and wife to save himself—is not

averse to a change of measures ; and though we cannot at first see the Court purged as with a winnowing fan, yet there will be enough of the good to control the bad—enough of the sober party to compel the grant of that universal toleration, for which we have sighed so long, as a maiden for her beloved. Time and opportunity will lead the way to more thorough reformation ; and that will be done without stroke of sword, which our friends failed to establish on a sure foundation, even when their victorious blades were in their hands.”

“ May God grant it !” said Bridgenorth ; “ for I fear me I should scruple to do aught which should once more unsheath the civil sword ; but welcome all that comes in a peaceful and parliamentary way.”

“ Ay,” said Christian, “ and which will bring with it the bitter amends, which our enemies have so long merited at our hands. How long hath our brother’s blood cried for vengeance from the altar !—Now shall that cruel Frenchwoman find that neither lapse of years, nor her powerful friends, nor the name of Stanley, nor the Sovereignty of Man, shall stop the stern course of the pursuer of blood. Her name shall be struck from the noble, and her heritage shall another take.”

“ Nay, but, brother Christian,” said Bridgenorth, “ art thou not over eager in pursuing this

thing?—It is thy duty as a Christian to forgive thine enemies.”

“Ay, but not the enemies of Heaven—not those who shed the blood of the saints,” said Christian, his eyes kindling with that vehement and fiery expression which at times gave to his uninteresting countenance the only character of passion which it ever exhibited. “No, Bridgenorth,” he continued, “I esteem this purpose of revenge holy—I account it a propitiatory sacrifice for what may have been evil in my life. I have submitted to be spurned by the haughty—I have humbled myself to be as a servant; but in my breast was the proud thought, I who do this—do it that I may avenge my brother’s blood.”

“Still, my brother,” said Bridgenorth, “although I participate thy purpose, and have aided thee against this Moabitish woman, I cannot but think thy revenge is more after the law of Moses than after the law of love.”

“This comes well from thee, Ralph Bridgenorth,” answered Christian; “from thee, who hast just smiled over the downfall of thine own enemy.”

“If you mean Sir Geoffrey Peveril,” said Bridgenorth, “I smile not on his ruin. It is well he is abased; but if it lies with me, I may humble his pride, but will never ruin his house.”

“You know your purpose best,” said Christian;

“and I do justice, brother Bridgenorth, to the purity of your principles ; but men who see with but worldly eyes, would discern little purpose of mercy in the strict magistrate and severe creditor—and such have you been to Peveril.”

“And, brother Christian,” said Bridgenorth, his colour rising as he spoke, “neither do I doubt your purpose, nor deny the surprising address with which you have procured such perfect information concerning the purposes of yonder woman of Ammon. But it is free to me to think, that in your intercourse with the Court, and with courtiers, you may, in your carnal and worldly policy, sink the value of those spiritual gifts, for which you were once so much celebrated among the brethren.”

“Do not apprehend it,” said Christian, recovering his temper, which had been a little ruffled by the previous discussion. “Let us but work together as heretofore ; and I trust each of us shall be found doing the work of a faithful servant to that old cause for which we have heretofore drawn the sword.”

So saying, he took his hat, and bidding Bridgenorth farewell, declared his intention of returning in the evening.

“Fare thee well !” said Bridgenorth ; “to that cause wilt thou find me ever a true and devoted adherent. I will act by that counsel of thine, and will not even ask thee—though it may grieve my

heart as a parent—with whom, or where, thou hast intrusted my child. I will try to cut off, and cast from me, even my right hand, and my right eye ; but for thee, Christian, if thou doest deal otherwise than prudently and honestly in this matter, it is what God and man will require at thy hand."

"Fear not me," said Christian, hastily, and left the place, agitated by reflections of no pleasant kind.

"I ought to have persuaded him to return," he said, as he stepped out into the street. "Even his hovering in this neighbourhood may spoil the plan on which depends the rise of my fortunes—ay, and of his child's. Will men say I have ruined her, when I shall have raised her to the dazzling height of the Duchess of Portsmouth, and perhaps made her mother to a long line of princes? Chiffinch hath vouched for opportunity ; and the voluptuary's fortune depends on his gratifying the taste of his master for variety. If she makes an impression, it must be a deep one ; and once seated in his affections, I fear not her being supplanted.—What will her father say? Will he, like a prudent man, put his shame in his pocket, because it is well gilded? or will he think it fitting to make a display of moral wrath and parental frenzy? I fear the latter—He has ever kept too strict a course to admit his conniving at such licence. But what

will his anger avail?—I need not be seen in the matter—those who are, will care little for the resentment of a country Puritan. And after all, what I am labouring to bring about is best for himself, the wench, and, above all, for me, Edward Christian.”

• With such base opiates did this unhappy wretch stifle his own conscience, while anticipating the disgrace of his friend’s family, and the ruin of a near relative, committed in confidence to his charge. The character of this man was of no common description ; nor was it by an ordinary road that he had arrived at the present climax of unfeeling and infamous selfishness.

Edward Christian, as the reader is aware, was the brother of that William Christian, who was the principal instrument of delivering up the Island of Man to the Republic, and who became the victim of the Countess of Derby’s revenge on that account. Both had been educated as Puritans, but William was a soldier, which somewhat modified the strictness of his religious opinions ; Edward, a civilian, seemed to entertain these principles in the utmost rigour. But it was only seeming. The exactness of deportment, which procured him great honour and influence among the *sober party*, as they were wont to term themselves, covered a voluptuous disposition, the gratification of which was sweet to him as stolen waters, and

pleasant as bread eaten in secret. While, therefore, his seeming godliness brought him worldly gain, his secret pleasures compensated for his outward austerity ; until the Restoration, and the Countess's violent proceedings against his brother, interrupted the course of both. He then fled from his native island, burning with the desire of revenging his brother's death—the only passion foreign to his own gratification which he was ever known to cherish, and which was also at least partly selfish, since it concerned the restoration of his own fortunes.

He found easy access to Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, who, in right of his Duchess, made great claims to such of the Derby estate as had been bestowed by the Parliament on his celebrated father-in-law. His influence at the Court of Charles, where a jest was a better plea than a long claim of faithful service, was so successfully exerted, as to contribute greatly to the depression of that loyal and ill-rewarded family. But Buckingham was incapable, even for his own interest, of pursuing the steady course which Christian suggested to him ; and his vacillation probably saved the remnant of the large estates of the Earl of Derby.

Meantime, Christian was too useful a follower to be disbanded. From Buckingham, and others of that stamp, he did not affect to conceal the laxity of his morals ; but, towards the numerous and

powerful party to which he belonged, he was able to disguise them by a seeming gravity of exterior, which he never laid aside. Indeed, so wide and absolute was then the distinction betwixt the Court and the city, that a man might have for some time played two several parts, as in two different spheres, without its being discovered in the one that he exhibited himself in a different light in the other. Besides, when a man of talent shews himself an able and useful partizan, his party will continue to protect and accredit him, in spite of conduct the most contradictory to their own principles. Some facts are, in such cases, denied—some are glozed over—and party-zeal is permitted to cover at least as many defects as ever doth charity.

Edward Christian had often need of the partial indulgence of his friends ; but he experienced it, for he was eminently useful. Buckingham, and other courtiers of the same class, however dissolute in their lives, were desirous of keeping some connection with the Dissenting or Puritanic party, as it was termed ; thereby to strengthen themselves against their opponents at Court. In such intrigues, Christian was a notable agent ; and at one time had nearly procured an absolute union between a class which professed the most rigid principles of religion and morality, and the latitudinarian courtiers, who set all principle at defiance.

Amidst the vicissitudes of a life of intrigue, du-

ring which Buckingham's ambitious schemes and his own repeatedly sent him across the Atlantic, it was Edward Christian's boast that he never lost sight of his principal object—revenge on the Countess of Derby. He maintained a close and intimate correspondence with his native island, so as to be perfectly informed of whatever took place there ; and he stimulated, on every favourable opportunity, the cupidity of Buckingham to possess himself of this petty kingdom, by procuring the forfeiture of its present Lord. It was not difficult to keep his patron's wild wishes alive on this topic, for his own mercurial imagination attached particular charms to the idea of becoming a sort of sovereign even in this little island ; and he was, like Cataline, as covetous of the property of others, as he was profuse of his own.

But it was not until the pretended discovery of the Papist Plot that the schemes of Christian could be brought to ripen ; and then, so odious were the Catholics in the eyes of the credulous people of England, that, upon the accusation of the most infamous of mankind, common informers, the scourings of jails, and the refuse of the whipping-post, the most atrocious charges against persons of the highest rank and fairest character, were readily received and credited.

This was a period which Christian did not fail to improve. He drew close his intimacy with

Bridgenorth, which had indeed never been interrupted, and readily engaged him in his schemes, which, in the eyes of his brother-in-law, were alike honourable and patriotic. But, while he flattered Bridgenorth with the achieving a complete reformation in the state—checking the profligacy of the Court—relieving the consciences of the Dissenters from the pressure of the penal laws—amending, in fine, the crying grievances of the time—while he shewed him also, in prospect, revenge upon the Countess of Derby, and a humbling dispensation on the House of Peveril, from whom Bridgenorth had suffered such indignity, Christian did not neglect, in the meanwhile, to consider how he could best benefit himself by the confidence reposed in him by his unsuspecting relation.

The extreme beauty of Alice Bridgenorth—the great wealth which time and economy had accumulated on her father—pointed her out as a most desirable match to repair the wasted fortunes of some of the followers of the Court ; and he flattered himself that he could conduct such a negotiation so as to be in a high degree conducive to his own advantage. He found there would be little difficulty in prevailing on Major Bridgenorth to intrust him with the guardianship of his daughter. That unfortunate gentleman had accustomed himself, from the very period of her birth, to regard the presence of his child as a worldly indul-

gence too great to be allowed to him ; and Christian had little trouble in convincing him that the strong inclination which he felt to bestow her on Julian Peveril, providing he could be brought over to his own political opinions, was a blameable compromise with his more severe principles. Late circumstances had taught him the incapacity and unfitness of Dame Debbitch for the sole charge of so dear a pledge ; and he readily and thankfully embraced the kind offer of her maternal uncle, Christian, to place Alice under the protection of a lady of rank in London, whilst he himself was to be engaged in the scenes of bustle and blood, which, in common with all good Protestants, he expected was speedily to take place on a general rising of the Papists, unless prevented by the active and energetic measures of the good people of England. He even confessed his fears, that his partial regard for Alice's happiness might enervate his efforts in behalf of his country ; and Christian had little trouble in eliciting from him a promise, that he would forbear to inquire after her for some time.

Thus certain of being the temporary guardian of his niece for a space long enough, he flattered himself, for the execution of his purpose, Christian endeavoured to pave the way by consulting Chif-finch, whose known skill in Court policy qualified

him best as an adviser on this occasion. But this worthy person, being, in fact, a purveyor for his Majesty's pleasures, and on that account high in his good graces, thought it fell within the line of his duty to suggest another scheme than that on which Christian consulted him. A woman of such exquisite beauty as Alice was described, he deemed more worthy to be a partaker of the affections of the merry Monarch, whose taste in female beauty was so exquisite, than to be made the wife of some worn-out prodigal of quality. And then, doing perfect justice to his own character, he felt it would not be one whit impaired, while his fortune would be, in every respect, greatly amended, if, after sharing the short reign of the Gwyns, the Davis's, the Roberts', and so forth, Alice Bridgenorth should retire from the state of a royal favourite, into the humble condition of Mrs Chiffinch.

After cautiously sounding Christian, and finding that the near prospect of interest to himself effectually prevented his starting at this iniquitous scheme, Chiffinch detailed it to him fully, carefully keeping the final termination out of sight, and talking of the favour to be acquired by the fair Alice as no passing caprice, but the commencement of a reign as long and absolute as that of the Duchess of Portsmouth, with whose avarice

and domineering temper Charles was now understood to be much tired, though the force of habit rendered him unequal to free himself of her yoke.

Thus chalked out, the scene prepared was no longer the intrigue of a Court pander, and a villainous resolution for the ruin of an innocent girl, but became a state intrigue, for the removal of an obnoxious favourite, and the subsequent change of the King's sentiments upon various material points, in which he was at present influenced by the Duchess of Portsmouth. In this light it was exhibited to the Duke of Buckingham, who, either to sustain his character for daring gallantry, or in order to gratify some capricious fancy, had at one time made love to the reigning favourite, and experienced a repulse which he had never forgiven.

But one scheme was too little to occupy the active and enterprizing spirit of the Duke. An appendix of the Popish Plot was easily so contrived as to involve the Countess of Derby, who, from character and religion, was precisely the person whom the credulous part of the public were disposed to suppose the likely accomplice of such a conspiracy. Christian and Bridgenorth undertook the perilous commission of attaching her even in her own little kingdom of Man, and had commissions for this purpose, which were only to be produced in case of their scheme taking effect.

It miscarried, as the reader is aware, from the

Countess's alert preparations for defence ; and neither Christian nor Bridgenorth held it sound policy to practise openly, even under parliamentary authority, against a lady so little liable to hesitate upon the measures most likely to secure her feudal sovereignty ; wisely considering, that even the omnipotence, as it has been somewhat too largely styled, of Parliament, might fail to relieve them from the personal consequences of a failure.

On the continent of Britain, however, no opposition was to be feared ; and so well was Christian acquainted with all the motions in the interior of the Countess's little court, or household, that Peveril would have been arrested the instant he set foot on shore, but for the gale of wind, which obliged the vessel, in which he was a passenger, to run for Liverpool. Here Christian, under the name of Ganlesse, unexpectedly met with him, and preserved him from the fangs of the well-breathed witnesses of the Plot, with the purpose of securing his dispatches, or, if necessary, his person also, in such a manner as to place him at his own discretion—a narrow and perilous game, which he thought it better, however, to undertake, than to permit these subordinate agents, who were always ready to mutiny against all in league with them, to obtain the credit which they must have done by the seizure of the Countess of Derby's dispatches. It was, besides, essential to Buckingham's schemes

that these should not pass into the hands of a public officer like Topham, who, however pompous and stupid, was upright and well-intentioned, until they had undergone the revisal of a private committee, where something might have probably been suppressed, even supposing that nothing had been added. In short, Christian, in carrying on his own separate and peculiar intrigue, by the agency of the Great Popish Plot, as it was called, acted just like an engineer, who derives the principle of motion which turns his machinery, from the steam-engine, or large water-wheel, constructed to drive a separate and larger engine. Accordingly, he was determined that, while he took all the advantage he could from their supposed discoveries, no one should be admitted to tamper or interfere with his own plans of profit and revenge.

Chiffinch, who, desirous of satisfying himself with his own eyes of that excellent beauty which had been so highly extolled, had gone down to Derbyshire on purpose, was infinitely delighted, when, during the course of a two hours' sermon at the dissenting chapel in Liverpool, which afforded him ample leisure for a deliberate survey, he arrived at the conclusion that he had never seen a form or face more captivating. His eyes having confirmed what was told him, he hurried back to the little inn which formed their place of rendezvous, and there awaited Christian and his niece,

with a degree of confidence in the success of their project which he had not before entertained ; and with an apparatus of luxury, calculated, as he thought, to make a favourable impression on the mind of a rustic girl. He was somewhat surprised, when, instead of Alice Bridgenorth, to whom he expected that night to have been introduced, he found that Christian was accompanied by Julian Peveril. It was indeed a severe disappointment, for he had prevailed on his own indolence to venture thus far from the Court, in order that he might judge, with his own paramount taste, whether Alice was really the prodigy which her uncle's praises had bespoken her, and, as such, a victim worthy of the fate to which she was destined.

A few words betwixt the worthy confederates determined them on the plan of stripping Peveril of the Countess's dispatches ; Chiffinch absolutely refusing to take any share in arresting him, as a matter of which his Master's approbation might be very uncertain.

Christian had also his own reasons for abstaining from so decisive a step. It was by no means like to be agreeable to Bridgenorth, whom it was necessary to keep in good humour ;—it was not necessary, for the Countess's dispatches were of far more importance than the person of Julian. Lastly, it was superfluous in this respect also, that Julian was on his road to his father's castle, where

it was likely he would be seized, as a matter of course, along with the other suspicious persons who fell under Topham's warrant, and the denunciations of his infamous companions. He, therefore, far from using any violence to Peveril, assumed towards him such a friendly tone, as might seem to warn him against receiving damage from others, and vindicate himself from having had any share in depriving him of his charge. This last manœuvre was achieved by an infusion of a strong narcotic into Julian's wine; under the influence of which, he slumbered so soundly, that the confederates were easily able to accomplish their inhospitable purpose.

The events of the succeeding days are already known to the reader. Chiffinch set forward to return to London with the packet, which it was desirable should be in Buckingham's hands as soon as possible; while Christian went to Moultrassie, to receive Alice from her father, and convey her safely to London—his accomplice agreeing to defer his curiosity to see her until they should be arrived in that city.

Before parting with Bridgenorth, Christian had exerted his utmost address to prevail on him to remain at Moultrassie; he had even outstepped the bounds of prudence, and, by his urgency, awakened some suspicions of an indefinite nature, which he found it difficult to lay to rest again. Bridge-

north, therefore, followed his brother-in-law to London ; and the reader has already been made privy to the arts which Christian used to prevent his farther interference with the destinies of his daughter, or the unhallowed schemes of her ill-chosen guardian. Still the latter, as he strode along the street in profound reflection, saw that his undertaking was attended with a thousand perils ; and the drops stood like beads on his brow when he thought of the presumptuous levity and fickle temper of Buckingham—the frivolity and intemperance of Chiffinch—the suspicions of the melancholy and bigotted, yet sagacious and honest Bridgenorth. “ Had I,” he thought, “ but tools fitted, each to their portion of the work, how easily could I heave asunder and disjoint the strength that opposes me ! But with these frail and insufficient implements, I am in daily, hourly, momentary danger, that one lever or other gives way, and that the whole ruin recoils on my own head. And yet, were it not for those failings I complain of, how were it possible for me to have acquired that power over them all which constitutes them my passive tools, even when they seem most to exert their own free will ? Yes, the bigots have some right when they affirm that all is for the best.”

It may seem strange, that, amidst the various subjects of Christian’s apprehension, he was never visited by any long or permanent doubt that the

virtue of his niece might prove the shoal on which his voyage should be wrecked. But he was an arrant rogue, as well as a hardened libertine ; and, in both characters, a professed disbeliever in the virtue of the fair sex.

CHAP. XII.

As for John Dryden's Charles, I own that King
Was never any very mighty thing ;
And yet he was a devilish honest fellow—
Enjoy'd his friend and bottle, and got mellow.

DR WOLCOT.

LONDON, the grand central point of intrigues of every description, had now attracted within its dark and shadowy region the greater number of the personages whom we have had occasion to mention.

Julian Peveril, amongst others of the dramatis personæ, had arrived, and taken up his abode in a remote inn in the suburbs. His business, he conceived, was to remain incognito until he should have communicated in private with the friends who were most like to lend assistance to his parents, as well as to his patroness, in their present situation of doubt and danger. Amongst these, the most powerful was the Duke of Ormond, whose faithful services, high rank, and acknowledged worth and virtue, still preserved an ascendancy in

that very Court, where, in general, he was regarded as out of favour. Indeed, so much consciousness did Charles display in his demeanour towards this celebrated noble, and servant of his father, that Buckingham once took the freedom to ask the King whether the Duke of Ormond had lost his Majesty's favour, or his Majesty the Duke's? since, whenever they chanced to meet, the King appeared the most embarrassed of the two. But it was not Peveril's good fortune to obtain the advice or countenance of this distinguished person. His Grace of Ormond was not at that time in London.

The letter, about the delivery of which the Countess had seemed most anxious after that to the Duke of Ormond, was addressed to Captain Barstow, (a Jesuit, whose real name was Fenwicke,) to be found, or at least to be heard of, in the house of one Martin Christal in the Savoy. To this place hastened Peveril, upon learning the absence of the Duke of Ormond. He was not ignorant of the danger which he personally incurred, by thus becoming a medium of communication betwixt a Popist priest and a suspected Catholic. But when he undertook the perilous commission of his patroness, he had done so frankly, and with the unreserved resolution of serving her in the manner in which she most desired her affairs to be conducted. Yet he could not forbear some secret apprehension, when he felt himself engaged in

the labyrinth of passages and galleries, which led to different obscure sets of apartments in the ancient building termed the Savoy.

This antiquated and almost ruinous pile occupied a part of the site of the public offices in the Strand, commonly called Somerset-House. The Savoy had been formerly a palace, and took its name from an Earl of Savoy, by whom it was founded. It had been the habitation of John of Gaunt, and various persons of distinction—had become a convent, an hospital, and finally, in Charles II.'s time, a waste of dilapidated buildings and ruinous apartments, inhabited chiefly by those who had some connection with, or dependence upon, the neighbouring palace of Somerset-House, which, more fortunate than the Savoy, had still retained its royal title, and was the abode of a part of the Court, and occasionally of the King himself, who had apartments there.

It was not without several inquiries, and more than one mistake, that, at the end of a long and dusky passage, composed of boards so wasted by time, that they threatened to give way under his feet, Julian at length found the name of Martin Christal, broker and appraiser, upon a shattered door. He was about to knock, when some one pulled his cloak ; and looking round, to his great astonishment, which indeed almost amounted to fear, he saw the little mute damsel, who had ac-

accompanied him for a part of the way on his voyage from the Isle of Man. “Fenella!” he exclaimed, forgetting that she could neither hear nor reply,—“Fenella! Can this be you?”

Fenella, assuming the air of warning and authority, which she had heretofore endeavoured to adopt towards him, interposed betwixt Julian and the door at which he was about to knock—pointed with her finger towards it in a prohibiting manner, and at the same time bent her brows, and shook her head sternly.

After a moment’s consideration, Julian could place but one interpretation upon Fenella’s appearance and conduct, and that was, by supposing her lady had come up to London, and had dispatched this mute attendant, as a confidential person, to apprise him of some change of her intended operations, which might render the delivery of her letters to Barstow, *alias* Fenwicke, superfluous, or perhaps dangerous. He made signs to Fenella, demanding to know whether she had any commission from the Countess. She nodded. “Had she any letter?” he continued, by the same mode of inquiry. She shook her head impatiently, and, walking hastily along the passage, made a signal to him to follow. He did so, having little doubt that he was about to be conducted into the Countess’s presence; but his surprise, at first excited by Fenella’s appearance, was increased by the ra-

pidity and ease with which she seemed to track the dusky and decayed mazes of the dilapidated Savoy, equal to that with which he had seen her formerly lead the way through the gloomy vaults of Castle Rushin, in the Isle of Man.

When he recollected, however, that Fenella had accompanied the Countess on a long visit to London, it appeared not improbable that she might then have acquired this local knowledge which seemed so accurate. Many foreigners, dependent on the Queen or Queen Dowager, had apartments in the Savoy. Many Catholic priests also found refuge in its recesses, under various disguises, and in defiance of the severity of the laws against Popery. What was more likely, than that the Countess of Derby, a Catholic and a Frenchwoman, should have had secret commissions amongst such people ; and that the execution of such should be intrusted, at least occasionally, to Fenella ?

Thus reflecting, Julian continued to follow her light and active footsteps as she glided from the Strand to Spring-Garden, and thence into the Park.

It was still early in the morning, and the Mall was untenanted, save by a few walkers, who frequented these shades for the wholesome purposes of air and exercise. Splendour, gaiety, and display, did not come forth, at that period, until noon was approaching. All readers have heard that

the whole space where the Horse Guards are now built, made, in the time of Charles II., a part of St James's Park ; and that the old building, now called the Treasury, was a part of the ancient Palace of Whitehall, which was thus immediately connected with the Park. The canal had been constructed, by the celebrated Le Notre, for the purpose of draining the Park ; and it communicated with the Thames by a decoy, stocked with a quantity of the rarer water-fowl. It was towards this decoy that Fenella bent her way with unabated speed ; and they were approaching a group of two or three gentlemen who sauntered by its banks, when, on looking closely at him who appeared to be the chief of the party, Julian felt his heart beat uncommonly thick, as if conscious of approaching some one of the highest consequence.

The person whom he looked upon was past the middle age of life, of a dark complexion, corresponding with the long, black, full-bottomed periwig, which he wore instead of his own hair. His dress was plain black velvet, with a diamond star, however, on his cloak, which hung carelessly over one shoulder. His features, strongly lined, even to harshness, had yet an expression of dignified good humour ; he was well and strongly built, walked upright and yet easily, and had upon the whole the air of a person of the highest consideration. He kept rather in advance of his companions, but

turned and spoke to them, from time to time, with much affability, and probably with some liveliness, judging by the smiles, and sometimes the scarce restrained laughter, by which some of his sallies were received by his attendants. They also wore only morning dresses ; but their looks and manner were those of men of rank, in presence of one in station still more elevated. They shared the attention of their principal in common with seven or eight little black curl-haired spaniels, or rather, as they are now called, cockers, which attended their master as closely, and perhaps with as deep sentiments of attachment, as the bipeds of the group ; and whose gambols, which seemed to afford him much amusement, he sometimes regulated, and sometimes encouraged. In addition to this pastime, a lacquey, or groom, was also in attendance, with one or two little baskets and bags, from which the gentleman we have described took, from time to time, a handful of seeds, and amused himself with throwing them to the water-fowl.

This, the King's favourite occupation, together with his remarkable countenance, and the deportment of the rest of the company towards him, satisfied Julian Peveril that he was approaching, perhaps indecorously, near the person of Charles Stuart, the second of that unhappy name.

While he hesitated to follow his dumb guide any nearer, and felt the embarrassment of being

unable to communicate to her his repugnance to further intrusion, a person in the royal retinue touched a light and lively air on the flageolet, at a signal from the King, who desired to have some tune repeated which had struck him in the theatre on the preceding evening. While the good-natured Monarch marked time with his foot, and with the motion of his hand, Fenella continued to approach him, and threw into her manner the appearance of one who was attracted, as it were in spite of herself, by the sounds of the instrument.

Anxious to know how this was to end, and astonished to see the dumb girl imitate so accurately the manner of one who actually heard the musical notes, Peveril also drew near, though at somewhat greater distance.

The King looked good-humouredly at both, as if he admitted their musical enthusiasm as an excuse for their intrusion ; but his eyes became rivetted on Fenella, whose face and appearance, although rather singular than beautiful, had something in them wild, fantastic, and, as being so, even captivating, to an eye which had been gratified perhaps to satiety with the ordinary forms of female beauty. She did not appear to notice how closely she was observed ; but, as if acting under an irresistible impulse, derived from the sounds to which she seemed to listen, she undid the bodkin

round which her long tresses were winded, and flinging them suddenly over her slender person, as if using them as a natural veil, she began to dance, with infinite grace and agility, to the tune which the flageolet played.

Peveril lost almost his sense of the King's presence, when he observed with what wonderful grace and agility Fenella kept time to notes, which could only be known to her by the motions of the musician's fingers. He had heard, indeed, among other prodigies, of a person in Fenella's unhappy situation acquiring, by some unaccountable and mysterious tact, the power of acting as an instrumental musician, nay, becoming so accurate a performer as to be capable of leading a musical band; and he had also heard of deaf and dumb persons dancing with sufficient accuracy, by observing the motions of their partner. But Fenella's performance seemed more wonderful than either, since the musician was guided by his written notes, and the dancer by the motions of the others; whereas Fenella had no intimation, save what she seemed to gather, with infinite accuracy, by observing the motion of the artist's fingers on his small instrument.

As for the King, who was ignorant of the particular circumstances which rendered Fenella's performance almost marvellous, he was contented, at her first commencement, to authorize what

seemed to him the frolic of this singular-looking damsel, by a good-humoured smile ; but when he perceived the exquisite truth and justice, as well as the wonderful combination of grace and agility, with which she executed to his favourite air a dance which was perfectly new to him, Charles turned his mere acquiescence into something like enthusiastic applause. He bore time to her motions with the movement of his foot—applauded with head and with hand—and seemed, like herself, carried away by the enthusiasm of the gestic art.

After a rapid yet graceful succession of *entrechats*, Fenella introduced a slow movement, which terminated the dance ; then dropping a profound curtesy, she continued to stand motionless before the King, her arms folded on her bosom, her head stooped, and her eyes cast down, after the manner of an oriental slave ; while through the misty veil of her shadowy locks it might be observed, that the colour which exercise had called to her cheeks was dying fast away, and resigning them to their native dusky hue.

“ By my honour,” exclaimed the King, “ she is like a fairy who trips it in moonlight. There must be more of air and fire than of earth in her composition. It is well poor Nelly Gwyn saw her not, or she would have died of grief and envy.—Come,

gentlemen, which of you contrived this pretty piece of morning pastime ?”

The courtiers looked at each other, but none of them felt authorized to claim the merit of a service so agreeable.

“ We must ask the quick-eyed nymph herself, then,” said the King ; and, looking at Fenella, he added, “ Tell us, my pretty one, to whom we owe the pleasure of seeing you ?—I suspect the Duke of Buckingham ; for this is exactly a *tour de son metier*.”

Fenella, on observing that the King addressed her, bowed low, and shook her head, in signal that she did not understand what he said. “ Odds-fish, that is true,” said the King ; “ she must perforce be a foreigner—her complexion and agility speak it. France or Italy has had the moulding of these elastic limbs, dark cheek, and eye of fire.” He then put to her in French, and again in Italian, the question, “ By whom she had been sent hither ?”

At the second repetition, Fenella threw back her veiling tresses, so as to shew the melancholy which sat on her brow ; while she sadly shook her head, and intimated by imperfect muttering, but of the softest and most plaintive kind, her organic deficiency.

“ Is it possible Nature can have made such a fault ?” said Charles. “ Can she have left so cu-

rious a piece as thou art without the melody of voice, whilst she has made thee so exquisitely sensible to the beauty of sound?—Stay; what means this? and what young fellow are you bringing up there? Oh, the master of the show, I suppose.—Friend,” he added, addressing himself to Peveril, who, on the signal of Fenella, stepped forward almost instinctively, and kneeled down, “we thank thee for the pleasure of this morning.—My Lord Marquis, you rooked me at piquet last night; for which disloyal deed thou shalt now atone, by giving a couple of pieces to this honest youth, and five to the girl.”

As the nobleman drew out his purse, and came forward to perform the King’s generous commission, Julian felt some embarrassment ere he was able to explain, that he had no title to be benefitted by the young person’s performance, and that his Majesty had mistaken his character.

“And who art thou, then, my friend?” said Charles; “but, above all, and particularly, who is this dancing nymph, whom thou standest waiting on like an attendant fawn?”

“The young person is a retainer of the Countess-Dowager of Derby, so please your Majesty,” said Peveril, in a low tone of voice; “and I am——”

“Hold, hold,” said the King; “this is a dance to another tune, and not fit for a place so public

Hark thee, friend ; do thou and the young woman follow Empson where he will conduct thee.—Empson, carry them—hark in thy ear.”

“ May it please your Majesty, I ought to say,” said Peveril, “ that I am guiltless of any purpose of intrusion——”

“ Now a plague on him who can take no hint,” said the King, cutting short his apology. “ Odds-fish, man, there are times when civility is the greatest impertinence in the world. Do thou follow Empson, and amuse thyself for an half hour’s space with the fairy’s company, till we shall send for you.”

Charles spoke this not without casting an anxious eye around, and in a tone which intimated apprehension of being overheard. Julian could only bow obedience, and follow Empson, who was the same person who played so rarely on the flageolet.

When they were out of sight of the King and his party, the musician wished to enter into conversation with his companions, and addressed himself first to Fenella, with a broad compliment of, “ By the mass, ye dance rarely—ne’er a slut on the boards shews such a shank. I would be content to play to you till my throat were as dry as my whistle. Come, be a little free—old Rowley will not quit the park till nine. I will carry you to Spring Gardens, and bestow sweet-cakes and a

quart of Rhenish on both of you ; and we'll be comrades. What the devil ! no answer ?—How's this, brother ?—Is this neat wench of yours deaf or dumb, or both ? I should laugh at that, and she trip it so well to the flageolet."

To rid himself of this fellow's discourse, Peveril answered him in French, that he was a foreigner, and spoke no English : glad to escape, though at the expense of a fiction, from the additional embarrassment of a fool, who was like to ask more questions than his own wisdom might have enabled him to answer.

" *Etranger*—that means stranger," muttered their guide ; " more French dogs and jades come to lick the good English butter off our bread, or perhaps an Italian puppet-show. Well, if it were not that they have a mortal enmity to the whole *gamut*, this were enough to make any honest fellow turn Puritan. But if I am to play to her at the Duchess's, I'll be d—d but I put her out in the tune, just to teach her to have the impudence to come to England, and to speak no English."

Having muttered to himself this truly British resolution, the musician walked briskly on towards a large house near the bottom of St James's Street, and entered the court, by a grated door, from the Park, of which the mansion commanded an extensive prospect.

Peveril, finding himself in front of a handsome

portico, under which opened a stately pair of folding-doors, was about to ascend the steps which led to the main entrance, when his guide seized him by the arm, exclaiming, "Hold, Mounseer. What! you'll lose nothing, I see, for want of courage; but you must keep the back way, for all your fine doublet. Here it is not, knock and it shall be opened; but may be instead, knock and you shall be knocked."

Suffering himself to be guided by Empson, Julian deviated from the principal door, to one which opened, with less ostentation, in an angle of the court-yard. On a modest tap from the flute-player, admittance was afforded him and his companions by a footman, who conducted them through a variety of stone passages, to a very handsome summer parlour, where a lady, or something resembling one, dressed in a style of extra elegance, was trifling with a play-book while she finished her chocolate. There is scarce any describing her, but by weighing her natural good qualities against the affectations which counterbalanced them. She would have been handsome, but for rouge and *minauderie*—would have been civil, but for overstrained airs of patronage and condescension—would have had an agreeable voice, had she spoken in her natural tone—and fine eyes, had she not made such desperate hard use of them. She could only spoil a pretty ankle by too liberal display; but

her shape, though she could not yet be thirty years old, had the embonpoint which might have suited better with ten years more advanced. She pointed Empson to a seat with the air of a Duchess, and asked him, languidly, how he did this age, that she had not seen him? and what folks these were he had brought with him?

“Foreigners, madam; d—d foreigners,” answered Empson; “starving beggars, that our old friend has picked up in the Park this morning—the wench dances, and the fellow plays on the Jew’s trump, I believe. On my life, madam, I begin to be ashamed of old Rowley; I must discard him, unless he keeps better company in future.”

“Fie, Empson,” said the lady; “consider it is our duty to countenance him, and keep him afloat; and indeed I always make a principle of it. Hark ye, he comes not hither this morning?”

“He will be here,” answered Empson, “in the walking of a minuet.”

“My God!” exclaimed the lady, with unaffected alarm; and starting up with utter neglect of her usual airs of graceful languor, she tripped as swiftly as a milk-maid into an adjoining apartment, where they heard presently a few words of eager and animated discussion.

“Something to be put out of the way, I suppose,” said Empson. “Well for madam I gave her the hint. There he goes, the happy swain.”

Julian was so situated, that he could, from the same casement through which Empson was peeping, observe a man in a laced roquelaure, and carrying his rapier under his arm, glide from the door by which he had himself entered, and out of the court, keeping as much as possible under the shade of the buildings.

The lady re-entered at this moment, and observing how Empson's eyes were directed, said, with a slight appearance of hurry, "A gentleman of the Duchess of Portsmouth's with a billet; and so tiresomely pressing for an answer, that I was obliged to write without my diamond pen. I have daubed my fingers, I dare say," she added, looking at a very pretty hand, and presently after dipping her fingers in a little silver vase of rose-water. "But that little exotic monster of yours, Empson, I hope she really understands no English?—On my life she coloured.—Is she such a rare dancer?—I must see her dance, and hear him play on the Jew's harp."

"Dance!" replied Empson; "she danced well enough when *I* played to her. I can make anything dance. Old Counsellor Clubfoot danced when he had a fit of the gout; you have seen no such *pas seul* in the theatre. I would engage to make the Archbishop of Canterbury dance the *hays* like a Frenchman. There is nothing in dancing; it all lies in the music. Rowley does not know that now.

He saw this poor wench dance ; and thought so much on't, when it was all along of me. I would have defied her to sit still. And Rowley gives her the credit of it, and five pieces to boot ; and I have only two for my morning's work !”

“ True, Master Empson,” said the lady ; “ but you are of the family, though in a lower station ; and you ought to consider——”

“ By G—, madam,” answered Empson, “ all I consider is, that I play the best flageolet in England ; and that they can no more supply my place, if they were to discard me, than they could fill Thames from Fleet-Ditch.”

“ Well, Master Empson, I do not dispute but you are a man of talents,” replied the lady ; “ still I say, mind the main chance—you please the ear to-day—another has the advantage of you to-morrow.”

“ Never, mistress, while ears have the heavenly power of distinguishing one note from another.”

“ Heavenly power, say you, Master Empson ?” said the lady.

“ Ay, madam, heavenly ; for some very neat verses which we had at our festival say,

‘ What know we of the blest above,
But that they sing and that they love.’

It is Master Waller wrote them, as I think ; who, upon my word, ought to be encouraged.”

“And so should you, my dear Empson,” said the dame, yawning, “were it only for the honour you do to your own profession. But in the meantime, will you ask these people to have some refreshment?—and will you take some yourself?—the chocolate is that which the Ambassador Portuguese fellow brought over to the Queen.”

“If it be genuine,” said the musician.

“How, sir?” said the fair one, half rising from her pile of cushions—“Not genuine, and in this house!—Let me understand you, Master Empson—I think, when I first saw you, you scarce knew chocolate from coffee.”

“By G—, madam,” answered the flageolet-player, “you are perfectly right. And how can I shew better how much I have profited by your ladyship’s excellent cheer, except by being critical?”

“You stand excused, Master Empson,” said the petit maitresse, sinking gently back on the downy couch, from which a momentary irritation had startled her—“I think the chocolate will please you, though scarce equal to what we had from the Spanish resident Mendoza.—But we must offer these strange people something. Will you ask them if they would have coffee and chocolate, or cold wild-fowl, fruit, and wine? They must be treated, so as to shew them where they are, since here they are.”

“Unquestionably, madam,” said Empson ; “but I have just at this instant forgot the French for chocolate, hot bread, coffee, game, and drinkables.”

“It is odd,” said the lady ; “and I have forgot my French and Italian at the same moment. But it signifies little—I will order the things to be brought, and they will remember the names of them themselves.”

Empson laughed loudly at this jest, and pawned his soul that the cold sirloin, which entered immediately after, was the best emblem of roast-beef all the world over. Plentiful refreshments were offered to all the party, of which both Fenella and Peveril partook.

In the meanwhile the flageolet-player drew closer to the side of the lady of the mansion—their intimacy was cemented, and their spirits set afloat, by a glass of liqueur, which gave them additional confidence in discussing the characters, as well of the superior attendants of the Court, as of the inferior rank, to which they themselves might be supposed to belong.

The lady, indeed, during this conversation, frequently exerted her complete and absolute superiority over Master Empson ; in which that musical gentleman humbly acquiesced whenever the circumstance was recalled to his attention, whether in the way of blunt contradiction, sarcastic insinuation, downright assumption of higher import-

ance, or in any of the other various modes by which such superiority is usually assisted and maintained. But the lady's obvious love of scandal was the lure which very soon brought her again down from the dignified port which for a moment she assumed, and placed her once more on a gossiping level with her companion.

Their conversation was too trivial, and too much allied to petty Court intrigues, with which he was totally unacquainted, to be in the least interesting to Julian. As it continued for more than an hour, he soon ceased to pay the least attention to a conversation consisting of nick-names, patch-work, and inuendo ; and employed himself in reflecting on his own complicated affairs, and the probable issue of his approaching audience with the King, which had been brought about by so singular an agent, and by means so unexpected. He often looked to his guide, Fenella ; and observed that she was, for the greater part of the time, drowned in deep and abstracted meditation. But three or four times—and it was when the assumed airs and affected importance of the musician and their hostess rose to the most extravagant excess—he observed that Fenella dealt askance on them some of those bitter and almost blighting elfin looks, which in the Isle of Man were held to imply contemptuous execration. There was something in all her manner so extraordinary, joined

to her sudden appearance, and her demeanour in the King's presence, so oddly, yet so well contrived to procure him a private audience—which he might, by graver means, have sought in vain—that it almost justified the idea, though he smiled at it internally, that the little mute agent was aided in her machinations by the kindred imps, to whom, according to Manx superstition, her genealogy was to be traced.

Another idea sometimes occurred to Julian, though he rejected the question, as being equally wild with those doubts which referred Fenella to a race different from that of mortals—"Was she really afflicted with those organical imperfections which had always seemed to sever her from humanity?—If not, what could be the motives of so young a creature practising so dreadful a penance for such an unremitted term of years? And how formidable must be the strength of mind which could condemn itself to so terrific a sacrifice—How deep and strong the purpose for which it was undertaken!"

But a brief recollection of past events enabled him to dismiss this conjecture as altogether wild and visionary. He had but to call to memory the various stratagems practised by his light-hearted companion, the young Earl of Derby, upon this forlorn girl—the conversations held in her presence, in which the character of a creature so irri-

table and sensitive upon all occasions, was freely, and sometimes satirically discussed, without her expressing the least acquaintance with what was going forward, to convince him that so deep a deception could never have been practised for so many years, by a being of a turn of mind so peculiarly jealous and irascible.

He renounced, therefore, the idea, and turned his thoughts to his own affairs, and his approaching interview with his Sovereign ; in which meditation we propose to leave him, until we briefly review the changes which had taken place in the situation of Alice Bridgenorth.

CHAP. XIII.

I fear the devil worst when gown and cassock,
Or, in the lack of them, old Calvin's cloak,
Conceals his cloven hoof.

Anonymous.

JULIAN PEVERIL had scarce set sail for Whitehaven, when Alice Bridgenorth and her gover-nante, at the hasty command of her father, were embarked with equal speed and secrecy on board of a bark bound for Liverpool. Christian accompanied them on their voyage, as the friend to whose guardianship Alice was to be consigned during any future separation from her father, and whose amusing conversation, joined to his pleasing though cold manners, as well as his near relationship, induced Alice, in her forlorn situation, to consider her fate as fortunate in having such a guardian.

At Liverpool, as the reader already knows, Christian took the first overt step in the villainy which he had contrived against the innocent girl, by exposing her at a meeting-house to the unhal-

lowed gaze of Chiffinch, in order to convince him she was possessed of such uncommon beauty as might well deserve the infamous promotion to which they meditated to raise her.

Highly satisfied with her personal appearance, Chiffinch was no less so with the sense and delicacy of her conversation, when he met her in company with her uncle afterwards in London. The simplicity, and at the same time the spirit of her remarks, made him regard her as his scientific attendant the cook might have done a newly invented sauce, sufficiently *piquante* in its qualities to awaken the jaded appetite of a cloyed and gorged epicure. She was, he said and swore, the very corner-stone on which, with proper management, and with his instructions, a few honest fellows might build a Court fortune.

That the necessary introduction might take place, the confederates judged fit she should be put under the charge of an experienced lady, whom some called Mistress Chiffinch, and others Chiffinch's mistress—one of those obliging creatures who are willing to discharge all the duties of a wife, without the inconvenient and indissoluble ceremony.

It was one, and not perhaps the least prejudicial consequence of the licence of that ill-governed time, that the bounds betwixt virtue and vice were so far smoothed down and levelled, that the frail

wife, or the tender friend who was no wife, did not necessarily lose their place in society ; but, on the contrary, if they moved in the higher circles, were permitted and encouraged to mingle with women whose rank was certain, and whose reputation was untainted.

A regular *liaison*, like that of Chiffinch and his fair one, inferred little scandal ; and such was his influence, as prime minister of his master's pleasures, that, as Charles himself expressed it, the lady whom we introduced to our readers in the last chapter, had obtained a brevet commission to rank as a married woman. And to do the gentle dame justice, no wife could have been more attentive to forward his plans, or more liberal in disposing of his income.

She inhabited a set of apartments called Chiffinch's—the scene of many an intrigue, both of love and politics ; and where Charles often held his private parties for the evening, when, as frequently happened, the ill-humour of the Duchess of Portsmouth, his reigning Sultana, prevented his supping with her. The hold which such an arrangement gave a man like Chiffinch, used as he well knew how to use it, made him of too much consequence to be slighted even by the first persons in the state, unless they stood aloof from all manner of politics and Court intrigue.

In the charge of Mistress Chiffinch, and of him

whose name she bore, Edward Christian placed the daughter of his sister, and of his confiding friend, calmly contemplating her ruin as an event certain to follow ; and hoping to ground upon it his own chance of a more assured fortune, than a life spent in intrigue had hitherto been able to procure for him.

The innocent Alice, without being able to discover anything wrong either in the scenes of unusual luxury with which she was surrounded, or in the manners of her hostess, which, both from nature and policy, were kind and caressing—felt nevertheless an instinctive apprehension that all was not right—a feeling in the human mind, allied, perhaps, to that sense of danger which animals exhibit when placed in the vicinity of the natural enemies of their race, and which makes birds cower when the hawk is in the air, and beasts tremble when the tiger is abroad in the desert. There was a heaviness at her heart which she could not dispel ; and the few hours which she had already spent at Chiffinch's were like those passed in a prison by one unconscious of the cause or event of his captivity. It was the third morning after her arrival in London, that the scene took place which we now recur to.

The impertinence and vulgarity of Empson, which was permitted to him as an unrivalled performer upon his instrument, were exhausting

themselves at the expense of all other musical professors, and Mistress Chiffinch was listening with careless indifference, when some one was heard speaking loudly, and with animation, in the inner apartment.

“ O gemini and gilliflower water !” exclaimed the damsel, startled out of her fine airs into her natural vulgarity of exclamation, and running to the door of communication—“ if he has not come back again after all !—and if old Rowley——”

A tap at the further and opposite door here arrested her attention—she quitted the handle of that which she was about to open as speedily as if it had burnt her fingers, and, moving back towards her couch, asked, “ Who is there ?”

“ Old Rowley himself, madam,” said the King, entering the apartment with his usual air of easy composure.

“ O crimini !—your Majesty !—I thought——”

“ That I was out of hearing, doubtless,” said the King ; “ and spoke of me as folks speak of absent friends. Make no apology. I think I have heard ladies say of their lace, that a rent is better than a darn.—Nay, be seated.—Where is Chiffinch ?”

“ He is down at York-House, your Majesty,” said the dame, recovering, though with no small difficulty, the calm affectation of her usual de-

meanour. " Shall I send your Majesty's commands ?"

" I will wait his return," said the King.—" Permit me to taste your chocolate."

" There is some fresh frothed in the office," said the lady ; and using a little silver call, or whistle, a black boy, superbly dressed, like an oriental page, with gold bracelets on his naked arms, and a gold collar around his equally bare neck, attended with the favourite beverage of the morning, in an apparatus of the richest china.

While he sipped his cup of chocolate, the King looked round the apartment, and observing Fennella, Peveril, and the musician, who remained standing beside a large Indian screen, he continued, addressing Mistress Chiffinch, though with polite indifference, " I sent you the fiddles this morning—or rather the flute—Empson, and a fairy elf whom I met in the Park, who dances divinely. She has brought us the very newest sara-band from the Court of Queen Mab, and I sent her here, that you may see it at leisure."

" Your Majesty does me by far too much honour," said Chiffinch, her eyes properly cast down, and her accents minced into becoming humility.

" Nay, little Chiffinch," answered the King, in a tone of as contemptuous familiarity as was consistent with his good-breeding, " it was not altogether for thine own private ear, though quite de-

serving of all sweet sounds ; but I thought Nelly had been with thee this morning.”

“ I can send Bajazet for her, your Majesty,” answered the lady.

“ Nay, I will not trouble your little heathen Sultan to go so far. Still it strikes me that Chiffinch said you had company—some country cousin, or such a matter—Is there not such a person ?”

“ There is a young person from the country,” said Mistress Chiffinch, striving to conceal a considerable portion of embarrassment ; “ but she is unprepared for such an honour as to be admitted into your Majesty’s presence, and——”

“ And therefore the fitter to receive it, Chiffinch. There is nothing in nature so beautiful as the first blush of a little rustic between joy and fear, and wonder and curiosity. It is the down on the peach—pity it decays so soon !—the fruit remains, but the first high colouring and exquisite flavour are gone.—Never put up thy lip for the matter, Chiffinch, for it is as I tell you ; so pray let us have *la belle cousine*.”

Mistress Chiffinch, more embarrassed than ever, again advanced towards the door of communication, which she had been in the act of opening when his Majesty entered. But just as she coughed pretty loudly, perhaps as a signal to some one within, voices were again heard in a raised tone

of altercation—the door was flung open, and Alice rushed out of the inner apartment, followed to the door of it by the enterprizing Duke of Buckingham, who stood fixed with astonishment on finding his pursuit of the flying fair one had hurried him into the presence of the King.

Alice Bridgenorth appeared too much transported with anger to permit her to pay attention to the rank or character of the company into which she had thus suddenly entered. “I remain no longer here, madam,” she said to Mrs Chiffinch, in a tone of uncontrollable resolution; “I leave instantly a house where I am exposed to company which I detest, and to solicitations which I despise.”

The dismayed Mistress Chiffinch could only implore her, in broken whispers, to be silent; adding, while she pointed to Charles, who stood with his eyes fixed rather on his audacious courtier than on the game which he pursued, “The King—the King!”

“If I am in the King’s presence,” said Alice, aloud, and in the same torrent of passionate feeling, while her eyes sparkled through tears of resentment and insulted modesty, “it is the better—it is his Majesty’s duty to protect me; and on his protection I throw myself.”

These words, which were spoken aloud, and boldly, at once recalled Julian to himself, who had

hitherto stood, as it were, bewildered. He approached Alice, and, whispering in her ear that she had beside her one who would defend her with his life, implored her to trust to his guardianship in this emergency.

Clinging to his arm in all the ecstasy of gratitude and joy, the spirit which had so lately invigorated Alice in her own defence, gave way in a flood of tears, when she saw herself supported by him whom perhaps she most wished to recognize as her protector. She permitted Peveril gently to draw her back towards the screen before which he had been standing ; where, holding by his arm, but at the same time endeavouring to conceal herself behind him, they waited the conclusion of a scene so singular.

The King seemed at first so much surprised at the unexpected apparition of the Duke of Buckingham, as to pay little or no attention to Alice, who had been the means of thus unceremoniously introducing his Grace into the presence at a most unsuitable moment. In that intriguing Court, it had not been the first time that the Duke had ventured to enter the lists of gallantry in rivalry of his Sovereign, which made the present insult the more intolerable. His purpose of lying concealed in these private apartments was explained by the exclamations of Alice ; and Charles, notwithstanding the placidity of his disposition, and his habi-

tual guard over his passions, resented the attempt to seduce his destined mistress, as an Eastern Sultan would have done the insolence of a vizier, who anticipated his intended purchases of captive beauty in the slave market. The swarthy features of Charles reddened, and the strong lines on his dark visage seemed to become inflated, as he said, in a voice which faltered with passion, " Buckingham, you dared not have thus insulted your equal ! To your master you may securely offer any affront, since his rank glues his sword to the scabbard."

The haughty Duke did not brook this taunt unanswered. " My sword," he said, with emphasis, " was never in the scabbard, when your Majesty's service required it should be unsheathed."

" Your Grace means, when its service was required for its master's interest," said the King ; " for you could only gain the coronet of a Duke by fighting for the royal crown. But it is over—I have treated you as a friend—a companion—almost an equal—you have repaid me with insolence and ingratitude."

" Sire," answered the Duke, firmly, but respectfully, " I am unhappy in your displeasure ; yet thus far fortunate, that while your words can confer honour, they cannot impair or take it away.—It is hard," he added, lowering his voice, so as only to be heard by the King, " that the squall of

a peevish wench should cancel the services of so many years."

"It is harder," said the King, in the same subdued tone, which both preserved through the rest of the conversation, "that a wench's bright eyes can make a nobleman forget the decencies due to his Sovereign's privacy."

"May I presume to ask your Majesty what decencies are those?" said the Duke.

Charles bit his lip to keep himself from smiling. "Buckingham," he said, "this is a foolish business; and we must not forget, (as we have nearly done,) that we have an audience to witness this scene, and should walk the stage with dignity. I will shew you your fault in private."

"It is enough that your Majesty has been displeased, and that I have unhappily been the occasion," said the Duke, kneeling; "although quite ignorant of any purpose beyond a few words of gallantry; and I sue thus low for your Majesty's pardon."

So saying, he kneeled gracefully down. "Thou hast it, George," said the placable Prince. "I believe thou wilt be sooner tired of offending, than I of forgiving."

"Long may your Majesty live to give the offence, with which it is your royal pleasure at present to charge my innocence," said the Duke.

“What mean you by that, my Lord?” said Charles, the angry shade returning to his brow for a moment.

“My Liege,” replied the Duke, “you are too honourable to deny your custom of shooting with Cupid’s bird-bolts in other men’s warrens. You have ta’en the royal right of free-forestry over every man’s park. It is hard that you should be so much displeased at hearing a chance arrow whizz near your own pales.”

“No more on’t,” said the King; “but let us see where the dove has harboured.”

“The Helen has found a Paris while we were quarrelling,” replied the Duke.

“Rather an Orpheus,” said the King; “and, what is worse, one that is already provided with a Eurydice—She is clinging to the fiddler.”

“It is mere fright,” said Buckingham, “like Rochester’s, when he crept into the bass-viol to hide himself from Sir Dermot O’Cleaver.”

“We must make the people shew their talents,” said the King, “and stop their mouths with money and civility, or we shall have this foolish encounter over half the town.”

The King then approached Julian, and desired him to take his instrument, and cause his female companion to perform a saraband.

“I had already the honour to inform your Majesty,” said Julian, “that I cannot contribute to

your pleasure in the way you command me ; and that this young person is——”

“ A retainer of the Lady Powis,” said the King, upon whose mind things not connected with his pleasures made a very slight impression. “ Poor lady, she is in trouble about the lords in the Tower.”

“ Pardon me, sir,” said Julian, “ she is a dependent of the Countess of Derby.”

“ True, true,” answered Charles ; “ it is indeed of Lady Derby, who hath also her own distresses in these times. Do you know who taught the young person to dance ? Some of her steps mightily resemble Le Jeune’s of Paris.”

“ I presume she was taught abroad, sir,” said Julian ; “ for myself, I am charged with some weighty business by the Countess, which I would willingly communicate to your Majesty.”

“ We will send you to our Secretary of State,” said the King. “ But this dancing envoy will oblige us once more, will she not ?—Empson, now that I remember, it was to your pipe that she danced—Strike up, man, and put mettle into her feet.”

Empson began to play a well-known measure ; and, as he had threatened, made more than one false note, until the King, whose ear was very accurate, rebuked him with, “ Sirrah, art thou drunk at this early hour, or must thou too be playing thy

slippery tricks with me? Thou thinkest thou art born to beat time, but I will have time beat into thee."

The hint was sufficient, and Empson took good care so to perform his air as to merit his high and deserved reputation. But on Fenella it made not the slightest impression. She rather leant than stood against the wall of the apartment; her countenance as pale as death, her arms and hands hanging down as if stiffened, and her existence only testified by the sobs which agitated her bosom, and the tears which flowed from her half-closed eyes.

"A plague on it," said the King, "some evil spirit is abroad this morning; and the wenches are all bewitched, I think. Cheer up, my girl. What, in the devil's name, has changed thee at once from a Nymph to a Niobe? If thou standest there longer, thou wilt grow to the very marble wall—Or—oddsfish, George, have you been bird-bolting in this quarter also?"

Ere Buckingham could answer to this charge, Julian again kneeled down to the King, and prayed to be heard, were it only for five minutes. "The young woman," he said, "had been long in attendance on the Countess of Derby. She was bereaved of the faculties of speech and hearing."

"Oddsfish, man, and dances so well?" said the

King. "Nay, all Gresham College shall never make me believe that."

"I would have thought it equally impossible, but for what I to-day witnessed," said Julian; "but only permit me, sir, to deliver the petition of my lady the Countess."

"And who art thou thyself, man?" said the Sovereign; "for though everything which wears bodice and breast-knot has a right to speak to a King, and be answered, I know not that they have a title to audience through an envoy extraordinary."

"I am Julian Peveril of Derbyshire," answered the suppliant, "the son of Sir Geoffrey Peveril of Martindale Castle, who——"

"Body of me—the old Worcester man?" said the King. "Oddsfish, I remember him well—some harm has happened to him, I think—Is he not dead, or very sick at least?"

"Ill at ease, and it please your Majesty, but not ill in health. He has been imprisoned on account of alleged accession to this Plot."

"Look you there," said the King; "I knew he was in trouble; and yet how to help the stout old Knight, I can hardly tell. I can scarce escape suspicion of the Plot myself, though the principal object of it is to take away my own life. Were I to stir to save a plotter, I should certainly be brought in as an accessory.—Buckingham, thou

hast some interest with those who built this fine state engine, or at least who have driven it on—be good natured for once, though it is scarcely thy wont, and interfere to shelter our old Worcester friend, Sir Godfrey. You have not forgot him ?”

“ No, sir,” answered the Duke ; “ for I never heard the name.”

“ It is Sir Geoffrey his Majesty would say,” said Julian.

“ And if his Majesty *did* say Sir Geoffrey, Master Peveril, I cannot see of what use I can be to your father,” replied the Duke, coldly. “ He is accused of a heavy crime ; and a British subject so accused, can have no shelter either from prince or peer, but must stand to the award and deliverance of God and his country.”

“ Now, Heaven forgive thee thy hypocrisy, George,” said the King, hastily. “ I would rather hear the devil preach religion than thee teach patriotism. Thou knowest as well as I, that the nation is in a scarlet fever for fear of the poor Catholics, who are not two men to five hundred ; and that the public mind is so harassed with new narrations of conspiracy, and fresh horrors every day, that people have as little real sense of what is just or unjust, as men who talk in their sleep of what is sense or nonsense. I have borne, and borne with it—I have seen blood flow on the scaffold, fearing

to thwart the nation in its fury—and I pray to God that I or mine be not called on to answer for it. I will no longer swim with the torrent, which honour and conscience call upon me to stem—I will act the part of a Sovereign, and save my people from doing injustice, even in their own despite.”

Charles walked hastily up and down the room as he expressed these unwonted sentiments, with energy equally unwonted. After a momentary pause, the Duke answered him gravely, “Spoken like a Royal King, sir ; but—pardon me—not like a King of England.”

Charles paused, as the Duke spoke, beside a window which looked full on Whitehall, and his eye was involuntarily attracted by the fatal window of the Banqueting House, out of which his unhappy father was conducted to execution. Charles was naturally, or, more properly, constitutionally, brave ; but a life of pleasure, together with the habit of governing his course rather by what was expedient than by what was right, rendered him unapt to dare the same scene of danger or of martyrdom, which had closed his father’s life and reign ; and the thought came over his half-formed resolution, like the rain upon a kindling beacon. In another man, his perplexity would have seemed almost ludicrous ; but Charles could not lose, even under these circumstances, the dignity and

grace which were as natural to him as his indifference and his good humour. "Our Council must decide in this matter," he said, looking to the Duke; "and be assured, young man," he added, addressing Julian, "your father will not want an intercessor in his King, so far as the laws will permit my interference in his behalf."

Julian was about to retire, when Fenella, with a marked look, put into his hand a slip of paper, on which she had hastily written, "The packet—give him the packet."

After a moment's hesitation, during which he reflected that Fenella was the organ of the Countess's pleasure, Julian resolved to obey. "Permit me, then, Sire," he said, "to place in your royal hands this packet, intrusted to me by the Countess of Derby. The letters have already been once taken from me; and I have little hope that I can now deliver them as they are addressed. I place them, therefore, in your royal hands, certain that they will evince the innocence of the writer."

The King shook his head as he took the packet reluctantly. "It is no safe office you have undertaken, young man. A messenger has sometimes his throat cut for the sake of his dispatches—But give them to me; and, Chiffinch, give me wax and a taper." He employed himself in folding the Countess's packet in another envelope. "Buckingham,"

he said, "you are evidence that I do not read them till the Council shall see them."

Buckingham approached, and offered his own services in folding the parcel, but Charles rejected his assistance ; and, having finished his task, he sealed the packet with his own signet-ring. The Duke bit his lip and retired.

"And now, young man," said the King, "your errand is sped, so far as it can at present be forwarded."

Julian bowed deeply, as to take leave at these words, which he rightly interpreted as a signal for his departure. Alice Bridgenorth still clung to his arm, and motioned to withdraw along with him. The King and Buckingham looked at each other in conscious astonishment, and yet not without a desire to smile, so strange did it seem to them that a prize, for which, an instant before, they had been mutually contending, should thus glide out of their grasp, or rather be borne off by a third and very inferior competitor.

"Mistress Chiffinch," said the King, with a hesitation which he could not disguise, "I hope your fair charge is not about to leave you?"

"Certainly not, your Majesty," answered Chiffinch. "Alice, my love—you mistake—that opposite door leads to your apartments."

"Pardon me, madam," answered Alice ; "I

have indeed mistaken my road, but it was when I came hither."

"The errant damozel," said Buckingham, looking at Charles with as much intelligence as etiquette permitted him to throw into his eye, and then turning it towards Alice, as she still held by Julian's arm, "is resolved not to mistake her road a second time. She has chosen a sufficient guide."

"And yet stories tell that such guides have led maidens astray," said the King.

Alice blushed deeply, but instantly recovered her composure so soon as she saw that her liberty was likely to depend upon the immediate exercise of resolution. She quitted, from a sense of insulted delicacy, the arm of Julian, to which she had hitherto clung; but as she spoke, she continued to retain a slight grasp of his cloak. "I have indeed mistaken my way," she repeated, still addressing Mistress Chiffinch, "but it was when I crossed this threshold. The usage to which I have been exposed in your house, has determined me to quit it instantly."

"I will not permit that, my young mistress," answered Chiffinch, "until your uncle, who placed you under my care, shall relieve me of the charge of you."

"I will answer for my conduct, both to my uncle, and, what is of more importance, to my father," said Alice. "You must permit me to depart, ma-

dam ; I am free-born, and you have no right to detain me."

" Pardon me, my young madam," said Mistress Chiffinch, " I have a right, and I will maintain it too."

" I will know that before quitting this presence," said Alice, firmly ; and, advancing a step or two, she dropped on her knee before the King. " Your Majesty," said she, " if indeed I kneel before King Charles, is the father of your subjects."

" Of a good many of them," said the Duke of Buckingham, apart.

" I demand protection of you, in the name of God, and of the oath your Majesty swore when you placed on your head the crown of this kingdom !"

" You have my protection," said the King, a little confused by an appeal so unexpected and so solemn. " Do but remain quiet with this lady, with whom your parents have placed you ; neither Buckingham nor any one else shall intrude on you."

" His Majesty," added Buckingham, in the same tone, and speaking from the restless and mischief-making spirit of contradiction, which he never could restrain, even when indulging it was most contrary, not only to propriety, but to his own interest,— " His Majesty will protect you, fair lady,

from all intrusion, save what must not be termed such."

Alice darted a keen look on the Duke, as if to read his meaning ; another on Charles, to know whether she had guessed it rightly. There was a guilty confession on the King's brow, which confirmed Alice's determination to depart. " Your Majesty will forgive me," she said ; " it is not here that I can enjoy the advantage of your royal protection. I am resolved to leave this house. If I am detained, it must be by violence, which I trust no one dare offer me in your Majesty's presence. This gentleman, whom I have long known, will conduct me to my friends."

" We make but an indifferent figure in this scene, methinks," said the King, addressing the Duke of Buckingham, and speaking in a whisper ; " but she must go—I neither will, nor dare, stop her from returning to her father."

" And if she does," swore the Duke internally, " I would, as Sir Andrew saith, I might never touch fair lady's hand." And stepping back, he spoke a few words with Empson the musician, who left the apartment for a few minutes, and presently returned.

The King seemed irresolute concerning the part he should act under circumstances so peculiar. To be foiled in a gallant intrigue, was to subject himself to the ridicule of his gay Court ; to persist in

it by any means which approached to constraint, would have been tyrannical ; and, what perhaps he might judge as severe an imputation, it would have been unbecoming a gentleman. “ Upon my honour, young lady,” he said, with an emphasis, “ you have nothing to fear in this house. But it is improper, for your own sake, that you should leave it in this abrupt manner. If you will have the goodness to wait but a quarter of an hour, Mistress Chiffinch’s coach will be placed at your command, to transport you where you will. Spare yourself the ridicule, and me the pain, of seeing you leave the house of one of my servants, as if you were escaping from a prison.”

The King spoke in good-natured sincerity, and Alice was inclined for an instant to listen to his advice ; but recollecting that she had to search for her father and uncle, or, failing them, for some suitable place of secure residence, it rushed on her mind that the attendants of Mistress Chiffinch were not likely to prove trusty guides or assistants in such a purpose. Firmly and respectfully she announced her purpose of instant departure. She needed no other escort, she said, than what this gentleman, Master Julian Peveril, who was well known to her father, would willingly afford her ; nor did she need that farther, than until she had reached her father’s residence.

“ Farewell, then, lady, a God’s name,” said the

King ; “ I am sorry so much beauty should be wedded to so many shrewish suspicions.—For you, Master Peveril, I should have thought you had enough to do with your own affairs, without interfering with the humours of the fair sex. The duty of conducting all strayed damsels into the right path, is, as matters go in this good city, rather too weighty an undertaking for your youth and inexperience.”

Julian, eager to conduct Alice safe from a place of which he began fully to appreciate the perils, answered nothing to this taunt, but, bowing reverently, led her from the apartment. Her sudden appearance, and the animated scene which followed, had entirely absorbed, for the moment, the recollection of his father, and of the Countess of Derby ; and while the dumb attendant of the latter remained in the room, a silent, and, as it were, stunned spectator of all that had happened, Peveril had become, in the predominating interest of Alice’s critical situation, totally forgetful of her presence. But no sooner had he left the room, without noticing or attending to her, than Fenella, starting as from a trance, drew herself up, and looked wildly around, like one waking from a dream, as if to assure herself that her companion was gone, and gone without paying the slightest attention to her. She folded her hands together, and cast her eyes upwards, with an expression of

such agony as explained to Charles (as he thought) what painful ideas were passing in her mind. "This Peveril is a perfect pattern of successful perfidy," said the King ; " he has not only succeeded at first sight in carrying off this Queen of the Amazons, but he has left us, I think, a disconsolate Ariadne in her place.—But weep not, my princess of pretty movements," he said, addressing himself to Fenella ; " if we cannot call in Bacchus to console you, we will commit you to the care of Empson, who shall drink with *Liber Pater* for a thousand pounds, and I will say done first."

As the King spoke these words, Fenella rushed past him with her wonted rapidity of step, and, with much less courtesy than was due to the royal presence, hurried down stairs, and out of the house, without attempting to open any communication with the Monarch. He saw her abrupt departure with more surprise than displeasure ; and presently afterwards, bursting into a fit of laughter, he said to the Duke, " Oddsfish, George, this young spark might teach the best of us how to manage the wenches. I have had my own experience, but I could never yet contrive either to win or lose them with such little ceremony."

" Experience, sir," replied the Duke, " cannot be acquired without years."

" True, George ; and you would, I suppose, in-

sinuate," said Charles, "that the gallant who acquires it, loses as much in youth as he gains in art? I defy your insinuation, George. You cannot overreach your master, old as you think him, either in love or politics. You have not the secret, *plumer la poule sans la faire crier*, witness this morning's work. I will give you odds at all games—ay, and at the Mall too, if thou darest accept my challenge.—Chiffinch, what for doest thou spoil thy pretty face with sobbing and hatching tears, which seem rather unwilling to make their appearance?"

"It is for fear," whined Chiffinch, "that your Majesty should think—that you should expect—"

"That I should expect gratitude from a courtier, or faith from a woman?" answered the King, patting her at the same time under the chin, to make her raise her face—"Tush! chicken, I am not so superfluous."

"There it is now," said Chiffinch, continuing to sob the more bitterly, as she felt herself unable to produce any tears; "I see your Majesty is determined to lay all the blame on me, when I am innocent as an unborn babe—I will be judged by his Grace."

"No doubt, no doubt, Chiffie," said the King. "His Grace and you will be excellent judges in each other's cause, and as good witnesses in each

other's favour. But to investigate the matter impartially, we must examine our evidence apart.—My Lord Duke, we meet at the Mall at noon, if your Grace dare accept my challenge.”

His Grace of Buckingham bowed, and retired.

CHAP. XIV.

But when the bully, with assuming pace,
Cocks his broad hat, edged round with tarnish'd lace,
Yield not the way—defy his strutting pride,
And thrust him to the muddy kennel's side.
Yet rather bear the shower and toils of mud,
Than in the doubtful quarrel risk thy blood.

GAY's *Trivia*.

JULIAN PEVERIL, half-leading, half-supporting Alice Bridgenorth, had reached the middle of St James's Street ere the doubt occurred to him which way they should bend their course. He then asked Alice whither he should conduct her, and learned, to his surprise and embarrassment, that, far from knowing where her father was to be found, she had no certain knowledge that he was in London, and only hoped that he had arrived, from the expressions which he had used at parting. She mentioned her uncle Christian's address, but it was with doubt and hesitation, arising from the hands in which he had already placed her ; and her reluctance to go again under his protection was strongly confirmed by her youthful guide, when a

few words had established to his conviction the identity of Ganlesse and Christian.—What then was to be done ?

“ Alice,” said Julian, after a moment’s reflection, “ you must seek your earliest and best friend—I mean my mother. She has now no castle in which to receive you—she has but a miserable lodging, so near the jail in which my father is confined, that it seems almost a cell of the same prison. I have not seen her since my coming hither ; but thus much have I learned by inquiry. We will now go to her apartment ; such as it is, I know she will share it with one so innocent and so unprotected as you are.”

“ Gracious Heaven !” said the poor girl, “ am I then so totally deserted, that I must throw myself on the mercy of her who, of all the world, has most reason to spurn me from her ?—Julian, can you advise me to this ?—Is there none else who will afford me a few hours’ refuge, till I can hear from my father ?—No other protectress but her whose ruin has, I fear, been accelerated by——Julian, I dare not appear before your mother ! she must hate me for my family, and despise me for my meanness. To be a second time cast on her protection, when the first has been so evil repaid—Julian, I dare not go with you.”

“ She has never ceased to love you, Alice,” said her conductor, whose steps she continued to at-

tend, even while declaring her resolution not to go with him, "she never felt anything but kindness towards you, nay, towards your father ; for though his dealings with us have been harsh, she can allow much for the provocation which he has received. Believe me, with her you will be safe as with a mother—perhaps may be the means of reconciling the divisions by which we have suffered so much."

" Might God grant it !" said Alice, " Yet how shall I face your mother? And will she have power to protect me against these powerful men—against my uncle Christian? Alas, that I must call him my worst enemy !"

" She has the ascendancy which honour hath over infamy, and virtue over vice," said Julian ; " and to no human power but your father's will she resign you, if you consent to choose her for your protectress. Come, then, with me, Alice ; and——"

Julian was interrupted by some one, who, laying an unceremonious hold of his cloak, pulled it with so much force as compelled him to stop and lay his hand on his sword. He turned at the same time, and, when he turned, beheld Fenella. The cheek of the mute glowed like fire ; her eyes sparkled, and her lips were forcibly drawn together, as if she had difficulty to repress those wild screams which usually attended her agonies of passion, and

which, uttered in the open street, must instantly have collected a crowd. As it was, her appearance was so singular, and her emotion so evident, that men gazed as they came on, and looked back after they had passed, at the singular vivacity of her gestures ; while, holding Peveril's cloak with one hand, she made, with the other, the most eager and imperious signs that he should leave Alice Bridgenorth and follow her. She touched the plume in her bonnet, to remind him of the Earl—pointed to her heart, to intimate the Countess—raised her closed hand, as if to command him in their name—and next moment folded both, as if to supplicate him in her own ; while, pointing to Alice with an expression at once of angry and scornful derision, she waved her hand repeatedly and disdainfully, to intimate that Peveril ought to cast her off, as something undeserving his protection.

Frightened, she knew not why, at these wild gestures, Alice clung closer to Julian's arm than she had at first dared to do ; and this mark of confidence in his protection seemed to increase the passion of Fenella.

Julian was dreadfully embarrassed ; his situation was sufficiently precarious, even before Fenella's ungovernable passions threatened to ruin the only plan which he had been able to suggest. What she wanted with him—how far the fate of

the Earl and Countess might depend on his following her, he could not even conjecture ; but be the call how peremptory soever, he resolved not to comply with it until he had seen Alice placed in safety. In the meantime, he determined not to lose sight of Fenella ; and disregarding her repeated, disdainful, and impetuous rejection of the hand which he offered her, he at length seemed so far to have soothed her, that she seized upon his right arm, and, as if despairing of his following *her* path, appeared reconciled to attend him on that which he himself should choose.

Thus, with a youthful female clinging to each arm, and both remarkably calculated to attract the public eye, though from very different reasons, Julian resolved to make the shortest road to the water-side, and there to take boat for Blackfriars, as the nearest point of landing to Newgate, where he concluded that Lance had already announced his arrival in London to Sir Geoffrey, then inhabiting that dismal region, and to his lady, who, so far as the jailor's rigour permitted, shared and softened his imprisonment.

Julian's embarrassment in passing Charing-Cross and Northumberland-House was so great as to excite the attention of the passengers ; for he had to compose his steps so as to moderate the unequal and rapid pace of Fenella to the timid and faint progress of his left-hand companion ; and while it

would have been needless to address himself to the former, who could not comprehend him, he dared not speak himself to Alice, for fear of awakening into frenzy the jealousy, or at least the impatience, of Fenella.

Many passengers looked at them with wonder, and some with smiles ; but Julian remarked that there were two who never lost sight of them, and to whom his situation, and the demeanour of his companions, seemed to afford matter of undisguised merriment. These were young men, such as may be seen in the same precincts in the present day, allowing for the difference in the fashion of their apparel. They abounded in periwig, and fluttered with many hundred yards of ribbon, disposed in bow-knots upon the sleeves, their breeches, and their waistcoats, in the very extremity of the existing mode. A quantity of lace and embroidery made their habits rather fine than tasteful. In a word, they were dressed in that caricature of the fashion, which sometimes denotes a hairbrained man of quality who has a mind to be distinguished as a fop of the first order, but is much more frequently the disguise of those who desire to be esteemed men of rank on account of their dress, having no other pretension to the distinction.

These two gallants passed Peveril more than once, linked arm in arm, then sauntered, so as to oblige him to pass them in turn, laughing and whis-

pering during these manœuvres—staring broadly at Peveril and his female companions—and affording them, as they came into contact, none of those facilities of giving place which are required on such occasions by the ordinary rules of the pavé.

Peveril did not immediately observe their impertinence ; but when it was too gross to escape his notice, his gall began to arise ; and in addition to all the other embarrassments of his situation, he had to combat the longing desire which he felt to cudgel handsomely the two coxcombs who seemed thus determined on insulting him. Patience and sufferance were indeed strongly imposed on him by circumstances ; but at length it became scarce possible to observe their dictates any longer.

When, for the third time, Julian found himself obliged, with his companions, to pass this troublesome brace of fops, they kept walking close behind him, speaking so loud as to be heard, and in a tone of perfect indifference whether he listened to them or not.

“ This is bumpkin’s best luck,” said the taller of the two, (who was indeed a man of remarkable size,) alluding to the plainness of Peveril’s dress, which was scarce fit for the streets of London—
“ Two such fine wenches, and under guard of a grey frock and an oaken riding-rod !”

“ Nay, Puritan’s luck rather, and more than

enough of it," said his companion. "You may read Puritan in his pace and in his patience."

"Right as a pint bumper, Tom," said his friend — "Issachar is an ass that stoopeth between two burthens."

"I have a mind to ease long-eared Laurence of one of his encumbrances," said the shorter fellow. "That black-eyed sparkler looks as if she had a mind to run away from him."

"Ay," answered the taller, "and the blue-eyed trembler looks as if she would fall behind into my loving arms."

At these words, Alice, holding still closer by Peveril's arm than formerly, mended her pace almost to running, in order to escape from men whose language was so alarming; and Fenella walked hastily forward in the same manner, having perhaps caught, from the men's gestures and demeanour, that apprehension which Alice had taken from their language.

Fearful of the consequences of a fray in the streets, which must necessarily part him from these unprotected females, Peveril endeavoured to compound betwixt the prudence necessary for their protection and his own rising resentment; and as this troublesome couple of attendants endeavoured again to pass them close to Hungerford Stairs, he said to them, with constrained calmness, "Gentlemen, I owe you something for the attention you

have bestowed on the affairs of a stranger. If you have any pretension to the name I have given you, you will tell me where you are to be found."

"And with what purpose," said the taller of the two, sneeringly, "does your most rustic gravity, or your most grave rusticity, require of us such information?"

So saying, they both faced about, in such a manner as to make it impossible for Julian to advance any farther.

"Make for the stairs, Alice," he said; "I will be with you in an instant." Then freeing himself with difficulty from the grasp of his companions, he cast his cloak hastily round his left arm, and said, sternly, to his opponents, "Will you give me your names, sirs; or will you be pleased to make way?"

"Not till we know for whom we are to give place," said one of them.

"For one who will else teach you what you want—good manners," said Peveril, and advanced, as if to push between them.

They separated, but one of them stretched forth his foot before Peveril, as if he meant to trip him. The blood of his ancestors was already boiling within him; he struck the man on the face with the oaken rod which he had just sneered at, and throwing it from him, instantly unsheathed his sword. Both the others drew, and pushed at once;

but he caught the point of the one rapier in his cloak, and parried the other thrust with his own weapon. He might have been less lucky in the second close, but a cry arose among the watermen, of "Shame, shame ! two upon one ?"

"They are men of the Duke of Buckingham's," said one fellow—"there's no safe meddling with them."

"They may be the devil's men, if they will," said an ancient Triton, flourishing his stretcher ; "but I say fair play, and old England for ever ; and, I say, knock the gold-laced puppies down, unless they will fight turn-about with gray jerkin, like honest fellows. One down—t'other come on."

The lower orders of London have in all times been remarkable for the delight which they have taken in club-law, or fist-law ; and for the equity and impartiality with which they see it administered. The noble science of defence was then so generally known, that a bout at single rapier excited at that time as much interest and as little wonder as a boxing-match in our own days. The by-standers, experienced in such affrays, presently formed a ring, within which Peveril and the taller and more forward of his antagonists were soon engaged in close combat with their swords, whilst the other, over-awed by the spectators, was prevented from interfering.

"Well done the tall fellow !"—"Well thrust,

long-legs !”—“Huzza for two ells and a quarter !” were the sounds with which the fray was at first cheered ; for Peveril’s opponent not only shewed great activity and skill in fence, but had also a decided advantage, from the anxiety with which Julian looked out for Alice Bridgenorth ; the care for whose safety diverted him in the beginning of the onset from that which he ought to have exclusively bestowed on the defence of his own life. A slight flesh-wound in the side at once punished, and warned him of, his inadvertence ; when, turning his whole thoughts on the business in which he was engaged, and animated with anger against his impertinent intruder, the rencontre speedily began to assume another face, amidst cries of “Well done, gray jerkin !”—“Try the metal of his gold doublet !”—“Finely thrust !”—“Curiously parried !”—“There went another eyelet hole to his broidered jerkin !”—“Fairly pinked, by G—d !” In fact, the last exclamation was uttered amid a general roar of applause, accompanying a successful and conclusive lounge, by which Peveril ran his gigantic antagonist through the body. He looked at his prostrate foe for a moment ; then, recovering himself, called loudly to know what had become of the lady.

“Never mind the lady, if you be wise,” said one of the watermen ; “the constable will be here in an instant. I’ll give your honour a cast over the

water in an instant. It may be as much as your neck's worth. Shall only charge a Jacobus."

"You be d—d," said one of his rivals in profession, "as your father was before you; for a Jacobus, I'll set the gentleman into Alsatia, where neither bailiff nor constable dare trespass."

"The lady, you scoundrels, the lady!" exclaimed Peveril—"where is the lady?"

"I'll carry your honour where you shall have enough of ladies, if that be your want," said the old Triton; and as he spoke, the clamour amongst the watermen was renewed, each hoping to cut his own profit out of the emergency of Julian's situation.

"A sculler will be least suspected, your honour," said one fellow.

"A pair of oars will carry you through the water like a wild-duck," said another.

"But you have got never a tilt, brother," said a third. "Now I can put the gentleman as snug as if he were under hatches."

In the midst of the oaths and clamour attending this aquatic controversy for his custom, Peveril at length made them understand that he would bestow a Jacobus, not on him whose boat was first oars, but on whomsoever should inform him of the fate of the lady.

"Of which lady?" said a sharp fellow; "for, to my thought, there was a pair on them."

“Of both, of both,” answered Peveril; “but first, of the fair-haired lady?”

“Ay, ay, that was she that shrieked so when goldjacket’s companion handed her into No. 20.”

“Who—what—who dared to hand her?” exclaimed Peveril.

“Nay, master, you have heard enough of my tale without a fee,” said the waterman.

“Sordid rascal!” said Peveril, giving him a gold piece, “speak out, or I’ll run my sword through you!”

“For the matter of that, master,” answered the fellow, “not while I can handle this trunnion—but a bargain’s a bargain; and so I’ll tell you, for your gold piece, that the comrade of the fellow forced one of your wenches, her with the fair hair, will she nill she, into Tickling Tom’s wherry; and they are far enough up Thames by this time, with wind and tide.”

“Sacred Heaven, and I stand here!” exclaimed Julian.

“Why, that is because your honour will not take a boat.”

“You are right, my friend—a boat—a boat instantly!”

“Follow me, then, squire.—Here, Tom, bear a hand—the gentleman is our fare.”

A volley of water language was exchanged betwixt the successful candidate for Peveril’s custom

and his disappointed brethren, which concluded by the ancient Triton's bellowing out, in a tone above them all, "That the gentleman was in a fair way to make a voyage to the isle of gulls, for that sly Jack was only bantering him—No. 20 had rowed for York-Buildings."

"To the isle of gallows," cried another; "for here comes one who will mar his trip up Thames, and carry him down to Execution-Dock."

In fact, as he spoke the word, a constable, with three or four of his assistants, armed with the old-fashioned brown-bills, which were still used for arming those guardians of the peace, cut off our hero's farther progress to the water's edge, by arresting him in the King's name. To attempt resistance would have been madness, as he was surrounded on all sides; so Peveril was disarmed, and carried before the nearest Justice of the Peace, for examination and committal.

The legal sage before whom Julian was taken, was a man very honest in his intentions, very bounded in his talents, and rather timid in his disposition. Before the general alarm given to England, and to the city of London in particular, by the notable discovery of the Popish Plot, Master Maulstatute had taken serene and undisturbed pride and pleasure in the discharge of his duties as a Justice of the Peace, with the exercise of all its honorary privileges and awful authority. But

the murder of Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey had made a strong, nay, an indelible impression on his mind ; and he walked the Courts of Themis with fear and trembling after that memorable and melancholy event.

Having a high idea of his official importance, and rather an exalted notion of his personal consequence, his honour saw nothing from that time but cords and daggers before his eyes, and never stepped out of his own house, which he fortified, and in some measure garrisoned, with half a dozen tall watchmen and constables, without seeing himself watched by a Papist in disguise, with a drawn sword under his cloak. It was even whispered, that, in the agonies of his fears, the worshipful Master Maulstatute mistook the kitchen-wench with a tinder-box, for a Jesuit with a pistol ; but if any one dared to laugh at such an error, he would have done well to conceal his mirth, lest he fell under the heavy inculpation of being a banterer and stifler of the Plot—a crime almost as deep as that of being himself a plotter. In fact, the fears of the honest Justice, however ridiculously exorbitant, were kept so much in countenance by the outcry of the day, and the general nervous fever which afflicted every good Protestant, that Master Maulstatute was accounted the bolder man and the better magistrate, while, under the terror of the air-drawn dagger which fancy placed con-

tinually before his eyes, he continued to dole forth justice in the recesses of his private chamber, nay, occasionally to attend Quarter-sessions, when the hall was guarded by a sufficient body of the militia. Such was the wight, at whose door, well chained and doubly bolted, the constable who had Julian in custody now gave his important and well-known knock.

Notwithstanding this official signal, the party was not admitted until the clerk, who acted the part of high-warder, had reconnoitred them through a grated wicket ; for who could say whether the Papists might not have made themselves master of Master Constable's sign, and have prepared a pseudo-watch to burst in and murder the Justice, under pretence of bringing a criminal before him ?—Less hopeful projects had figured in the Narrative of the Popish Plot.

All being found right, the key was turned, the bolts were drawn, and the chain unhooked, so as to permit entrance to the constable, the prisoner, and the assistants ; and was then as suddenly shut against the witnesses, who, as less trust-worthy persons, were requested (through the wicket) to remain in the yard, until they should be called in their respective turns.

Had Julian been inclined for mirth, as was far from being the case, he must have smiled at the incongruity of the clerk's apparel, who had belted

over his black buckram suit a buff baldric, sustaining a broadsword, and a pair of huge horse-pistols ; and, instead of the low flat hat, which, coming in place of the city cap, completed the dress of a scrivener, had placed on his greasy locks a rusted steel cap, which had seen Marston-moor ; across which projected his well-used quill, in the guise of a plume—the shape of the morion not admitting of its being stuck, as usual, behind his ear.

This whimsical figure conducted the constable, his assistants, and the prisoner, into the low hall, where his principal dealt forth justice ; who presented an appearance still more singular than that of his dependant.

Sundry good Protestants, who thought so highly of themselves as to suppose they were worthy to be distinguished as objects of Catholic cruelty, had taken to defensive arms on the occasion. But it was quickly found that a breast-plate and back-plate of proof, fastened together with iron clasps, was no convenient enclosure for a man who meant to eat venison and custard ; and that a buff-coat, or shirt of mail, was scarcely more accommodating to the exertions necessary on such active occasions. Besides, there were other objections, as the alarming and menacing aspects which such warlike habiliments gave to the Exchange, and other places, where merchants most do congregate ; and exco-riations were bitterly complained of by many, who,

not belonging to the artillery company, or trained bands, had no experience in bearing defensive armour.

To obviate these objections, and, at the same time, to secure the persons of all true Protestant citizens against open force or privy assassinations on the part of the Papists, some ingenious artist, belonging, we may presume, to the worshipful Mercers' Company, had contrived a species of armour, of which neither the horse-armoury in the Tower, nor Gwynnap's Gothic-Hall, no, nor Dr Meyrick's invaluable collection of ancient arms, has preserved any specimen. It was called silk-armour, being composed of a doublet and breeches of quilted silk, so closely stiched, and of such thickness, as to be proof against either bullet or steel ; while a thick bonnet, of the same materials, with ear-flaps attached to it, and, on the whole, much resembling a night-cap, completed the equipment, and ascertained the security of the wearer from the head to the knee.

Master Maulstatute, among other worthy citizens, had adopted this singular panoply, which had the advantage of being soft, and warm, and flexible, as well as safe. And he now sat in his judicial elbow-chair—a short, rotund figure, hung round, as it were, with cushions, for such was the appearance of the quilted garments ; and with a nose protruded out from under the silken casque, the size of

which, together with the unwieldiness of the whole figure, gave his worship no indifferent resemblance to the sign of the Hog in Armour, which was considerably improved by the defensive garment being of a dusky orange-colour, not altogether unlike the hue of those wild swine which are to be found in the forests of Hampshire.

Secure in these invulnerable envelopements, his worship had rested content, although severed from his own death-doing weapons, of rapier, poniard, and pistols, which were placed, nevertheless, at no great distance from his chair. One offensive implement, indeed, he thought it prudent to keep on the table beside his huge Coke upon Lyttleton. This was a sort of pocket-flail, consisting of a piece of strong ash, about eighteen inches long, to which was attached a swinging club of *lignum-vitæ*, nearly twice as long as the handle, but jointed so as to be easily folded up. This instrument, which bore at that time the singular name of the Protestant flail, might be concealed under the coat, until circumstances demanded its public appearance. A better precaution against surprise than his arms, whether offensive or defensive, was a strong iron grating, which, crossing the room in front of the Justice's table, and communicating by a grated door, which was usually kept locked, effectually separated the accused party from his Judge.

Justice Maulstatute, such as we have described

him, chose to hear the accusation of the witnesses before calling on Peveril for his defence. The detail of the affray was briefly given by the by-standers, and seemed deeply to touch the spirit of the examiner. He shook his silken casque emphatically, when he understood that, after some language betwixt the parties, which the witnesses did not quite understand, the young man in custody struck the first blow, and drew his sword before the wounded party had unsheathed his weapon. Again he shook his crested head yet more solemnly, when the result of the conflict was known; and yet again, when one of the witnesses declared, that, to the best of his knowledge, the sufferer in the fray was a gentleman belonging to the household of his Grace the Duke of Buckingham.

“A worthy peer,” quoth the armed magistrate—“a true Protestant, and a friend to his country. Mercy on us, to what a height of audacity hath this age arisen! We see well, and could, were we as blind as a mole, out of what quiver this shaft hath been drawn.”

He then put on his spectacles, and having desired Julian to be brought forward, he glared upon him awfully with those glazen eyes, from under the shade of his quilted turban.

“So young,” he said, “and so hardened—lack-a-day!—and a Papist, I’ll warrant.”

Peveril had time enough to recollect the neces-

sity of his being at large, if he could possibly obtain his freedom, and interposed here a civil contradiction of his worship's gracious supposition. "He was no Catholic," he said, "but an unworthy member of the Church of England."

"Perhaps but a luke-warm Protestant, notwithstanding," said the sage Justice; "there are those amongst us who ride tantivy to Rome, and have already made out half the journey—ahem!"

Peveril disowned his being any such.

"And who art thou, then?" said the Justice; "for, friend, to tell you plainly, I like not your visage—ahem!"

These short and emphatic coughs were accompanied each by a succinct nod, intimating the perfect conviction of the speaker that he had made the best, the wisest, and the most acute observation, of which the premises admitted.

Julian, irritated by the whole circumstances of his detention, answered the Justice's interrogation in rather a lofty tone. "My name is Julian Peveril!"

"Now, Heaven be around us!" said the terrified Justice—"the son of that black-hearted Papist and traitor, Sir Geoffrey Peveril, now in hands, and on the verge of trial!"

"How, sir!" exclaimed Julian, forgetting his situation, and stepping forward to the grating, with a violence which made the bars clatter, he so start-

led the appalled Justice, that, snatching his Protestant flail, Master Maulstatute aimed a blow at his prisoner, to repel what he apprehended was a premeditated attack. But whether it was owing to the Justice's hurry of mind, or inexperience in managing the weapon, he not only missed his aim, but brought the swinging part of the machine round his own skull, with such a severe counter-buff, as completely to try the efficacy of his cushioned helmet, and, in spite of its defence, to convey a stunning sensation, which he rather hastily imputed to the consequence of a blow received from Peveril.

His assistants did not indeed directly confirm the opinion which the Justice had so unwarrantably adopted ; but all with one voice agreed, that, but for their own active and instantaneous interference, there was no knowing what mischief might have been done by a person so dangerous as the prisoner. The general opinion that he meant to proceed in the matter of his own rescue, *par voie du fait*, was indeed so deeply impressed on all present, that Julian saw it would be in vain to offer any defence, especially being but too conscious that the alarming, and probably the fatal consequences of his rencontre, rendered his commitment inevitable. He contented himself with asking into what prison he was to be thrown ; and when the formidable word Newgate was returned as full answer,

he had at least the satisfaction to reflect, that, stern and dangerous as was the shelter of that roof, he would at least enjoy it in company with his father; and that, by some means or other, they might perhaps obtain the satisfaction of a melancholy meeting, under the circumstances of mutual calamity, which seemed impending over their house.

Assuming the virtue of more patience than he actually possessed, Julian gave the magistrate, (whom all the mildness of his demeanour could not, however, reconcile to him,) the direction to the house where he lodged, together with a request that his servant, Lance Outram, might be permitted to send him his money and wearing apparel; adding, that all which might be in his possession, either of arms or writings,—the former amounting to a pair of travelling pistols, and the last to a few memoranda of little consequence,—he willingly consented to place at the disposal of the magistrate. It was in that moment that he entertained, with sincere satisfaction, the comforting reflection, that the important papers of Lady Derby were already in possession of the Sovereign.

The Justice promised attention to his requests; but reminded him, with great dignity, that his present complacent and submissive behaviour ought, for his own sake, to have been adopted from the beginning, instead of disturbing the presence of magistracy with such atrocious marks of the ma-

lignant, rebellious, and murderous spirit of Popery, as he had at first exhibited. "Yet," he said, "as he was a goodly young man, and of honourable quality, he would not suffer him to be dragged through the streets as a felon, but had ordered a coach for his accommodation."

His honour, Master Maulstatute, uttered the word "coach" with the importance of one who, as Dr Johnson saith of later date, is conscious of the dignity of putting horses to his chariot. The worshipful Master Maulstatute did not, however, on this occasion, do Julian the honour of yoking to his huge family caroché the two "frampal jades," (to use the term of the period,) which were wont to drag that ark to the meeting-house of pure and precious Master Howlaglass on a Thursday's evening for lecture, and on a Sunday for a four-hours sermon. He had recourse to a leathern convenience, then more rare, but just introduced, with every prospect of the great facility which has since been afforded by hackney coaches, to all manner of communication, honest and dishonest, legal and illegal. Our friend Julian, hitherto much more accustomed to the saddle than to any other conveyance, soon found himself in a hackney carriage, with the constable and two assistants for his companions, armed up to the teeth—the port of destination being, as they had already intimated, the ancient fortress of Newgate.

CHAP. XV.

'Tis the black ban-dog of our jail—Pray look on him,
But at a wary distance—rouse him not—
He bays not till he worries.

The Black Dog of Newgate.

THE coach stopped before those tremendous gates, which resemble those of Tartarus, save only that they rather more frequently permit safe and honourable egress ; although at the price of the same anxiety and labour with which Hercules, and one or two of the demi-gods, extricated themselves from the Hell of the ancient mythology.

Julian stepped out of the vehicle, carefully supported on either side by his companions, and also by one or two turnkeys, whom the first summons of the deep bell at the gate had called to their assistance. That attention, it may be guessed, was not bestowed lest he should make a false step, so much as for fear of his attempting an escape, of which he had no intentions. A few prentices and straggling boys of the neighbouring market, which derived considerable advantage from increase of

custom, in consequence of the numerous commitments on account of the Popish Plot, and who therefore were zealous Protestants, saluted him on his descent with jubilee shouts of "Whoop, Papist ! whoop, Papist ! D———n to the Pope, and all his adherents !"

Under such auspices, Peveril was ushered in beneath that gloomy gateway, where so many bid adieu on their entrance at once to honour and to life. The dark and dismal arch under which he soon found himself, opened upon a large courtyard, where a number of debtors were employed in playing at hand-ball, pitch-and-toss, hustle-cap, and other games ; for which relaxations the rigour of their creditors afforded them full leisure, while it debarred them the means of pursuing the honest labour by which they might have redeemed their affairs, and maintained their starving and beggared families.

But with this careless and desperate group Julian was not to be numbered, being led, or rather forced, by his conductors, into a low-arched door, which, carefully secured by bolts and bars, opened for his reception on one side of the archway, and closed, with all its fastenings, on the moment after his hasty entrance. He was then conducted along two or three gloomy passages, which, where they intersected each other, were guarded by as many strong wickets, one of iron grates, and the

others of stout oak, clenched with plates, and studded with nails of the same metal. He was not allowed to pause until he found himself hurried into a little round vaulted room, which several of these passages opened into, and which seemed, with respect to the labyrinth through part of which he had passed, to resemble the central point of a spider's web, in which the main lines of that reptile's curious maze are always found to terminate.

The resemblance did not end here ; for in this small vaulted apartment, the walls of which were hung round with musketoons, pistols, cutlasses, and other weapons, as well as with many sets of fetters and irons of different construction, all disposed in great order, and ready for employment, a person sat, who might not unaptly be compared to a huge bloated and bottled spider, placed there to secure the prey which had fallen into his toils.

This official had originally been a very strong and square-built man, of large size, but was now so overgrown, from over-feeding, perhaps, and want of exercise, as to bear the same resemblance to his former self which a stall-fed ox still retains to a wild bull. The look of no man is so inauspicious as a fat man, upon whose features ill-nature has marked an habitual stamp. He seems to have reversed the old proverb, and to have thriven under the influence of the worst affections of the

mind. Passionate we can allow a jolly mortal to be ; but it seems unnatural to his goodly case to be sulky and brutal. Now, this man's features, surly and tallow-coloured ; his limbs, swelled and disproportioned ; his huge paunch and unwieldy carcase, suggested the idea, that, having once found his way into this central recess, he had there batten, like the weasel in the fable, and fed largely and foully, until he had become incapable of retreating through any of the narrow paths that terminated upon his cell ; and was there compelled to remain, like a toad under the cold stone, fattening amid the squalid airs of the dungeons by which he was surrounded, which would have proved pestiferous to any other than such a congenial inhabitant. Huge iron-clasped books lay before this ominous specimen of pinguitude—the records of the realm of misery, in which he officiated as prime minister ; and had Peveril come thither as an unconcerned visitor, his heart would have sunk within him at considering the mass of human wretchedness which must needs be registered in these fatal volumes. But his own distresses sat too heavy on his mind to permit any general reflections of this nature.

The constable and this bulky official whispered together, after the former had delivered to the latter the warrant of Julian's commitment. The word *whispered* is not quite accurate, for their

communication was carried on less by words than by looks and expressive signs ; by which, in all such situations, men learn to supply the use of language, and to add mystery to what is in itself sufficiently terrible to the captive. The only words which could be heard were those of the Warden, or, as he was called then, the Captain of the Jail, " Another bird to the cage ?——"

" Who will whistle ' Pretty Pope of Rome,' with any starling in your Knight's ward," answered the constable, with a facetious air, checked, however, by the due respect to the superior presence in which he stood.

The Grim Feature relaxed into something like a smile as he heard the officer's observation ; but instantly composing himself into the stern solemnity which for an instant had been disturbed, he looked fiercely at his new guest, and pronounced, with an awful and emphatic, yet rather an under-voice, the single and impressive word, "*Garnish !*"

Julian Peveril replied with assumed composure ; for he had heard of the customs of such places, and was resolved to comply with them, so as if possible to obtain the favour of seeing his father, which he shrewdly guessed must depend on his gratifying the avarice of the keeper. " I am quite ready," he said, " to accede to the customs of the place in which I unhappily find myself. You

have but to name your demands, and I will satisfy them."

So saying, he drew out his purse, thinking himself at the same time fortunate that he had retained about him a considerable sum of gold. The Captain remarked its width, depth, its extension and depression, with an involuntary smile, which had scarce contorted his hanging under-lip, and the wiry and greasy mustachio which thatched the upper, when it was checked by the recollection that there were regulations which set bounds to his rapacity, and prevented him from pouncing on his prey like a kite, and swooping it all off at once.

This chilling reflection produced the following sullen reply to Peveril :—" There were sundry rates. Gentlemen must choose for themselves. He asked nothing but his fees. But civility," he muttered, " must be paid for."

" And shall, if I can have it for payment," said Peveril ; " but the price, my good sir, the price ?"

He spoke with some degree of scorn, which he was the less anxious to repress, that he saw, even in this jail, his purse gave him an indirect but powerful influence over his jailor.

The Captain seemed to feel the same ; for, as he spoke, he plucked from his head, almost involuntarily, a sort of scalded fur-cap, which served it for covering. But his fingers revolting from so un-

usual an act of complaisance, began to indemnify themselves by scratching his grizzly shock-head, as he muttered, in a tone resembling the softened growling of a mastiff when he has ceased to bay the intruder who shews no fear of him, "There are different rates. There is the Little Ease, for common fees of the crown—rather dark, and the common-sewer runs below it; and some gentlemen object to the company, who are chiefly padders and michers. Then the Master's side—the garnish came to one piece—and none lay stowed there but who were in for murder at the least."

"Name your highest price, sir, and take it," was Julian's concise reply.

"Three pieces for the Knight's ward," answered the governor of this terrestrial Tartarus.

"Take five, and place me with Sir Geoffrey," was again Julian's answer, throwing down the money upon the desk before him.

"Sir Geoffrey?—Hum!—ay, Sir Geoffrey," said the jailor, as if meditating what he ought to do. "Well, many a man has paid money to see Sir Geoffrey—Scarce so much as you have, though. But then you are like to see the last on him—Ha, ha, ha!"

These broken muttered exclamations, which terminated with a laugh somewhat like the joyous growl of a tiger over his meal, Julian could not comprehend; and only replied to, by repeating

his request to be placed in the same cell with Sir Geoffrey.

“ Ay, master,” said the jailor, “ never fear ; I’ll keep word with you, as you seem to know something of what belongs to your station and mine. And hark ye, Jem Clink will fetch you the darbies.”

“ Derby !” interrupted Julian,—“ Has the Earl or Countess——”

“ Earl or Countess !—Ha, ha, ha !” again laughed, or rather growled the Warden. “ What is your head running on ? You are a high fellow, belike ; but all is one here. The darbies are the fetlocks—the fast-keepers, my boy ; and if you are not the more conforming, I can add you a steel night-cap, and a curious bosom-friend, to keep you warm of a winter night. But don’t be disheartened ; you have behaved genteel ; and you shall not be put upon. And as for this here matter, ten to one it will turn out chance-medley, or manslaughter, at the worst on’t ; and then it is but a singed thumb, instead of a twisted neck—always if there be no Papistry about it, for then I warrant nothing.—Take the gentleman’s worship away, Clink.”

A turnkey, who was one of the party that had ushered Peveril into the presence of this Cerberus, now conveyed him out in silence ; and, under his guidance, the prisoner was carried through a second labyrinth of passages, with cells opening

on each side, to that which was destined for his reception.

On the road through this sad region, the turnkey more than once ejaculated, "Why, the gentleman must be stark-mad! Could have had the best crown cell to himself for less than half the garnish, and must pay double to pig in with Sir Geoffrey. Ha, ha!—Is Sir Geoffrey akin to you, if one may make free to ask?"

"I am his son," answered Peveril, sternly, in hopes to impose some curb on the fellow's impertinence; but the man only laughed louder than before.

"His son!—Why, that's best of all—Why, you are a strapping youth—five feet ten, if you be an inch—and Sir Geoffrey's son—Ha, ha, ha!"

"Truce with your impertinence," said Julian. "My situation gives you no title to insult me."

"No more I do," said the turnkey, smothering his mirth at the recollection, perhaps, that the prisoner's purse was not exhausted. "I only laughed because you said you were Sir Geoffrey's son. But no matter—'tis a wise child that knows his own father. And here is Sir Geoffrey's cell; so you and he may settle the fatherhood between you."

So saying, he ushered his prisoner into a cell, or rather a strong room of the better order, in which there were four chairs, a truckle-bed, and one or two other articles of furniture.

Julian looked eagerly around for his father ; but to his surprise the room appeared totally empty. He turned with anger on the turnkey, and charged him with misleading him ; but the fellow answered, “ No, no, master ; I have kept faith with you. Your father, if you call him so, is only tapped in some corner. A small hole will hide him ; but I’ll rouse him out presently for you.—Here, hoicks !—Turn out ! Sir Geoffrey !—Here is—Ha, ha, ha !—your son—or your wife’s son—for I think you can have but little share in him—come to wait on you.”

Peveril knew not how to resent the man’s insolence ; and indeed his anxiety, and apprehension of some strange mistake, mingled with, and in some degree neutralized his anger. He looked again and again, around and around the room ; until at length he became aware of something rolled up in a dark corner, which rather resembled a small bundle of crimson cloth than any living creature. At the vociferation of the turnkey however, the object seemed to acquire life and motion—uncoiled itself in some degree, and, after an effort or two, gained an erect posture ; still covered from top to toe with the crimson drapery in which it was at first wrapped. Julian, at the first glance, imagined from the size that he saw a child of five years old ; but a shrill and peculiar tone of voice soon assured him of his mistake.

“Warder,” said this unearthly sound, “what is the meaning of this disturbance? Have you more insults to heap on the head of one who hath ever been the butt of fortune’s malice? But I have a soul that can wrestle with all my misfortunes; it is as large as any of your bodies.”

“Nay, Sir Geoffrey, if this be the way you welcome your own son!”—said the turnkey; “but you quality folks know your own ways best.”

“My son!” exclaimed the little figure. “Audacious——”

“Here is some strange mistake,” said Peveril, in the same breath. “I sought Sir Geoffrey—”

“And you have him before you, young man,” said the pigmy tenant of the cell, with an air of dignity; at the same time casting on the floor his crimson cloak, and standing before them in his full dignity of three feet six inches of height. “I am the favoured servant of three successive Sovereigns of the Crown of England, now the tenant of this dungeon, and the sport of its brutal keepers. I am Sir Geoffrey Hudson.”

Julian, though he had never before seen this important personage, had no difficulty in recognizing, from description, the celebrated dwarf of Henrietta Maria, who had survived the dangers of civil war and private quarrel—the murder of his royal master, Charles I., and the exile of his widow—to fall upon evil tongues and evil days,

amidst the unsparing accusations connected with the Popish Plot. He bowed to the unhappy old man, and hastened to explain to him, and to the turnkey, that it was Sir Geoffrey Peveril, of Martindale Castle in Derbyshire, whose prison he had desired to share.

“ You should have said that before you parted with the gold-dust, my master,” answered the turnkey ; “ for t’other Sir Geoffrey, that is the big, tall, grey-haired man, was sent to the Tower last night ; and the Captain will think he has kept his word well enow with you, by lodging you with this here Sir Geoffrey Hudson, who is the better show of the two.”

“ I pray you go to your master,” said Peveril ; “ explain the mistake ; and say to him I beg to be sent to the Tower.”

“ The Tower !—Ha, ha, ha !” exclaimed the fellow. “ The Tower is for lords and knights, and not for squires of low degree—for high treason, and not for ruffling on the streets with rapier and dagger ; and there must go a secretary’s warrant to send you there.”

“ At least, let me not be a burthen on this gentleman,” said Julian. “ There can be no use in quartering us together, since we are not even acquainted. Go tell your master of the mistake.”

“ Why, so I should,” said Clink, still grinning, “ if I were not sure that he knew it already. You

paid to be sent to Sir Geoffrey, and he sent you to Sir Geoffrey. You are so put down in the register, and he will blot it for no man. Come, come, be conformable, and you shall have light and easy irons—that's all I can do for you."

Resistance and expostulation being out of the question, Peveril submitted to have a light pair of fetters secured on his ankles, which allowed him, nevertheless, the power of traversing the apartment.

During this operation, he reflected that the jailor, who had taken the advantage of the equivoque betwixt the two Sir Geoffreys, must have acted as his assistant had hinted, and cheated him from malice prepense, since the warrant of committal described him as the son of Sir Geoffrey Peveril. It was therefore in vain, as well as degrading, to make farther application to such a man on the subject. Julian determined to submit to his fate, as what could not be averted by any effort of his own.

Even the turnkey was moved in some degree by his youth, good mien, and the patience with which, after the first effervescence of disappointment, the new prisoner resigned himself to his situation. "You seem a brave young gentleman," he said; "and shall at least have a good dinner, and as good a pallet to sleep on, as is within the walls of Newgate.—And, Master Sir Geoffrey, you

ought to make much of him, since you do not like tall fellows ; for I can tell you that Master Peveril is in for pinking long Jack Jenkins, that was the Master of Defence—as tall a man as is in London, always excepting the King's Porter, Master Evans, that carried you about in his pocket, Sir Geoffrey, as all the world has heard tell.”

“ Begone, fellow !” answered the dwarf. “ Fellow, I scorn you !”

The fellow sneered, withdrew, and locked the door behind him.

CHAP. XVI.

Degenerate youth, and not of Tydeus' kind,
Whose little body lodged a mighty mind.

I had.

LEFT quiet at least, if not alone, for the first time after the events of this troubled and varied day, Julian threw himself on an old oaken seat, beside the embers of a sea-coal fire, and began to muse on the miserable situation of anxiety and danger in which he was placed ; where, whether he contemplated the interests of his love, his family affections, or his friendships, all seemed such a prospect as that of a sailor who looks upon breakers on every hand, from the deck of a vessel which no longer obeys the helm.

As Peveril sat sunk in despondency, his companion in misfortune drew a chair to the opposite side of the chimney-corner, and began to gaze at him with a sort of solemn earnestness, which at length compelled him, though almost in spite of himself, to pay some attention to the singular

figure who seemed so much engrossed with contemplating him.

Geoffrey Hudson, (we drop occasionally the title of knighthood, which the King had bestowed on him in a frolic, but which might introduce some confusion into our history,) although a dwarf of the least possible size, had nothing positively ugly in his countenance, or actually distorted in his limbs. His head, hands, and feet, were indeed large, and disproportioned to the height of his body, and his body itself much thicker than was consistent with symmetry, but in a degree which was rather ludicrous than disagreeable to look upon. His countenance, in particular, had he been a little taller, would have been accounted, in youth, handsome, and now, in age, striking and expressive ; it was but the uncommon disproportion betwixt the head and the trunk which made the features seem whimsical and bizarre—an effect which was considerably increased by the dwarf's mustachoes, which it was his pleasure to wear so large, that they almost twisted back amongst, and mingled with, his grizzled hair.

The dress of this singular wight announced that he was not entirely free from the unhappy taste which frequently induces those whom nature has marked by personal deformity, to distinguish, and at the same time to render themselves ridiculous, by the use of showy colours, and garments fantas-

tically and extraordinarily fashioned. But poor Geoffrey Hudson's laces, embroideries, and the rest of his finery, were sorely worn and tarnished by the time which he had spent in jail, under the vague and malicious accusation that he was somehow or other an accomplice in this all-involving, all-devouring whirlpool of a Popish conspiracy—an impeachment which, if pronounced by a mouth the foulest and most malicious, was at that time sufficiently predominant to sully the fairest reputation. It will presently appear, that in the poor man's manner of thinking, and tone of conversation, there was something analogous to his absurd fashion of apparel ; for, as in the latter, good stuff and valuable decorations were rendered ludicrous by the fantastic fashion in which they were made up ; so, such glimmerings of good sense and honourable feeling as the little man often evinced, were made ridiculous by a restless desire to assume certain airs of importance ; and a great jealousy of being despised, on account of the peculiarity of his outward form.

After the fellow-prisoners had looked at each other for some time in silence, the dwarf, conscious of his dignity as first owner of their joint apartment, thought it necessary to do the honours of it to the new-comer. “ Sir,” he said, modifying the alternate harsh and squeaking tones of his voice into accents as harmonious as they could attain,

“ I understand you to be the son of my worthy namesake, and ancient acquaintance, the stout Sir Geoffrey Peveril of the Peak. I promise you, I have seen your father where blows have been going more plenty than gold pieces ; and for a tall heavy man, who lacked, as we martialists thought, some of the lightness and activity of our more slightly made Cavaliers, he performed his duty as a man might desire. I am happy to see you, his son ; and, though by a mistake, I am glad we are to share this comfortless cabin together.”

Julian bowed and thanked his courtesy ; and Geoffrey Hudson having broken the ice, proceeded to question him without farther ceremony. “ You are no courtier, I presume, young gentleman ?”

Julian replied in the negative.

“ I thought so,” continued the dwarf ; “ for although I have now no official duty at Court, the region in which my early years were spent, and where I once held a considerable office, yet I still, when I had my liberty, visited the Presence from time to time, as in duty bound for former service ; and am wont, from old habit, to take some note of the courtly gallants, those choice spirits of the age, among whom I was once enrolled. You are, not to compliment you, a marked figure, Master Peveril—though something of the tallest, as was

your father's case ; I think, I could scarce have seen you anywhere without remembering you."

Peveril thought he might, with great justice, have returned the compliment, but contented himself with saying, " he had scarce seen the British Court."

" 'Tis pity," said Hudson ; " a gallant can hardly be formed without frequenting it. But you have been perhaps in a rougher school ; you have served, doubtless——"

" My Maker, I hope," said Julian.

" Fie on it, you mistake. I meant," said Hudson, " *a la Françoise*,—you have served in the army ?"

" No. I have not yet had that honour," said Julian.

" What ! neither courtier nor soldier, Master Peveril ?" said the important little man : " Your father is to blame. By cock and pie he is, Master Peveril ! How shall a man be known, or distinguished, unless by his bearing in peace and war ? I tell you, sir, that at Newberry, where I charged with my troop abreast with Prince Rupert, and when, as you may have heard, we were both beaten off by those cuckoldy hinds the Trained Bands of London,—we did what men could ; and I think it was a matter of three or four minutes after most of our gentlemen had been driven off, that his Highness and I continued to cut at their long

pikes with our swords ; and I think might have broken in, but that I had a tall, long-legged brute of a horse, and my sword was somewhat short,—in fine, at last we were obliged to make volte-face, and then, as I was going to say, the fellows were so glad to get rid of us, that they set up a great jubilee cry of ‘ There goes Prince Robin and Cock Robin !’—Ay, ay, every scoundrel among them knew me well. But those days are over.—And where were you educated, young gentleman ?”

Peveril named the household of the Countess of Derby.

“ A most honourable lady, upon my word as a gentleman,” said Hudson.—“ I knew the noble Countess well, when I was about the person of my royal mistress, Henrietta Maria. She was then the very muster of all that was noble, loyal, and lovely. She was, indeed, one of the fifteen fair ones of the Court, whom I permitted to call me Piccolomini ; a foolish jest on my somewhat diminutive figure, which always distinguished me from ordinary beings, even when I was young—I have now lost much stature by stooping ; but, always the ladies had their jest at me.—Perhaps, young man, I had my own amends of some of them somewhere, and somehow or other—I *say* nothing if I had or no. But certainly to serve the ladies, and condescend to their humours, even when some-

what too free, or too fantastic, is the true decorum of gentle blood."

Depressed as his spirits were, Peveril could scarce forbear smiling when he looked at the pigmy creature, who told these stories with infinite complacency, and appeared disposed to proclaim, as his own herald, that he had been a very model of valour and gallantry, though love and arms seemed to be pursuits totally irreconcilable to his shrivelled, weather-beaten, and weasoned countenance, and wasted limbs. Julian was, however, so careful to avoid giving his companion pain, that he endeavoured to humour him, by saying, that, "unquestionably, one bred up like Sir Geoffrey Hudson, in courts and camps, knew exactly when to suffer personal freedoms, and when to control them."

The little Knight, with great vivacity, though with some difficulty, began to drag his seat from the side of the fire opposite to that where Julian was seated, and at length succeeded in bringing it near him, in token of increasing cordiality.

"You say well, Master Peveril," said the dwarf; "and I have given proofs of both bearing and forbearing.—Yes, sir, there was not that thing which my most royal mistress, Henrietta Maria, could have required of me, that I would not have complied with, sir; I was her sworn servant, both in war and in festival, in battle and pageant, sir.

At her Majesty's particular request, I once condescended to become—ladies, you know, have strange fancies—to become the tenant, for a time, of the interior of a pie."

"Of a pie!" said Julian, somewhat amazed.

"Yes, sir, of a pie. I hope you find nothing risible in my complaisance?" replied his companion, something jealously.

"Not I, sir," said Peveril; "I have other matters than laughter in my head at present."

"So had I," said the dwarfish champion, "when I found myself imprisoned in a huge platter, of no ordinary dimensions you may be assured, since I could lie at length in it, and when I was entombed, as it were, in walls of standing crust, and a huge cover of pastry, of size enough to have recorded the epitaph of a general officer or an archbishop. Sir, notwithstanding the conveniences which were made to give me air, it was more like being buried alive than aught else which I could think of."

"I conceive it, sir," said Julian.

"Moreover, sir," continued the dwarf, "there were few in the secret, which was contrived for the Queen's divertisement; for advancing of which I would have crept into a filbert nut, had it been possible; and few, as I said, being private in the scheme, there was a risk of accidents. I doubted, while in my darksome abode, whether some awk-

ward attendant might not have let me fall, as I have seen happen to a venison pasty ; or whether some hungry guest might not anticipate the moment of my resurrection, by sticking his knife into my upper crust. And though I had my weapons about me, young man, as has been my custom in every case of peril, yet, if such a rash person had plunged deep into the bowels of the supposed pasty, my sword and dagger could barely have served me to avenge, assuredly not to prevent, either of these catastrophes."

"Certainly I do so understand it," said Julian, who began, however, to feel that the company of little Hudson, talkative as he shewed himself, was likely rather to aggravate than to alleviate the inconveniences of a prison.

"Nay," continued the little man, enlarging on his former topic, "I had other subjects of apprehension ; for it pleased my Lord of Buckingham, his Grace's father who now bears the title, in his plenitude of Court favour, to command the pasty to be carried down to the office, and committed anew to the oven, alleging preposterously that it was better to be eaten warm than cold."

"And did this, sir, not disturb your equanimity?" said Julian.

"My young friend," said Geoffrey Hudson, "I cannot deny it.—Nature will claim her rights from the best and boldest of us.—I thought of Nebu-

chadnezzar and his fiery furnace; and I waxed warm with apprehension.—But, I thank Heaven, I also thought of my sworn duty to my royal mistress; and was thereby obliged and enabled to resist all temptations to make myself prematurely known. Nevertheless, the Duke—if of malice, may Heaven forgive him—followed down into the office himself, and urged the master-cook very hard that the pasty should be heated, were it but for five minutes. But the master-cook, being privy to the very different intentions of my royal mistress, did most manfully resist the order; and I was again reconveyed in safety to the royal table.”

“And in due time liberated from your confinement, I doubt not?” said Peveril.

“Yes, sir; that happy, and I may say glorious moment, at length arrived,” continued the dwarf. “The upper crust was removed—I started up to the sound of trumpet and clarion, like the soul of a warrior when the last summons shall sound—or rather, (if that simile be over audacious,) like a spell-bound champion relieved from his enchanted state. It was then that, with my buckler on my arm, and my trusty bilboa in my hand, I executed a sort of warlike dance, in which my skill and agility then rendered me pre-eminent, displaying, at the same time, my postures, both of defence and offence, in a manner so totally inimitable, that I was almost deafened with the applause of all around

me, and half drowned by the scented waters with which the ladies of the Court deluged me from their casting-bottles. I had amends of his Grace of Buckingham also ; for as I tripped a hasty morris hither and thither upon the dining-table, now offering my blade, now recovering it, I made a blow at his nose—a sort of *estramaçon*—the dexterity of which consists in coming mighty near to the object you seem to aim at, yet not attaining it. You may have seen a barber make such a flourish with his razor. I promise you his Grace sprung back a half-yard at least. He was pleased to threaten to brain me with a chicken-bone, as he disdainfully expressed it ; but the King said, ‘ George, you have but a Rowland for an Oliver.’ And so I tripped on, shewing a bold heedlessness of his displeasure, which few dared to have done at that time, albeit countenanced to the utmost like me by the smiles of the brave and the fair. But, well-a-day ! sir, youth, its fashions, its follies, its frolics, and all its pomp and pride, are as idle and transitory as the crackling of thorns under a pot.”

“ The flower that is cast into the oven were a better simile,” thought Peveril. “ Good God, that a man should live to regret not being young enough to be still treated as baked meat, and served up in a pie !”

His companion, whose tongue had for many days been as closely imprisoned as his person,

seemed resolved to indemnify his loquacity, by continuing to indulge it on the present occasion at his companion's expense. He proceeded, therefore, in a solemn tone, to moralize on the adventure which he had narrated.

“Young men will no doubt think one to be envied,” he said, “who was thus enabled to be the darling and admiration of the Court—(Julian stood self-exculpated from the suspicion)—and yet it is better to possess fewer means of distinction, and remain free from the back-biting, the slander, and the odium, which are always the share of Court favour. Men who had no other cause, reflected upon me because my size varied somewhat from the common proportion; and jests were sometimes unthinkingly passed upon me by those I was bound to, who did not in that case, peradventure, sufficiently consider that the wren is made by the same hand which made the bustard, and that the diamond, though small in size, out-values ten thousand-fold the rude granite. Nevertheless, they proceeded in the vein of humour; and as I could not in duty or gratitude retort upon *them*, I was compelled to cast about in my mind how to vindicate my honour towards those, who, being in the same rank with myself as servants and courtiers, nevertheless bore themselves towards me as if they were of a superior class in the rank of honour, as well as in the accidental circumstance of stature. And as a lesson

to my own pride, and that of others, it so happened, that the pageant which I have but just narrated—which I justly reckon the most honourable moment of my life, excepting perhaps my distinguished share in the battle of Round-way-down—became the cause of a most tragic event, in which I acknowledge the greatest misfortune of my existence.”

The dwarf here paused, fetched a sigh, big at once with regret and with the importance becoming the subject of a tragic history ; then proceeded as follows :—

“ You would have thought in your simplicity, young gentleman, that the pretty pageant I have mentioned could only have been quoted to my advantage, as a rare masking frolic, prettily devised, and not less deftly executed ; and yet the malice of the courtiers, who maligned and envied me, made them strain their wit, and exhaust their ingenuity, in putting false and ridiculous constructions upon it. In short, my ears were so much offended with allusions to pies, puff-paste, ovens, and the like, that I was compelled to prohibit such subject of mirth, under penalty of my instant and severe displeasure. But it happ’d there was then a gallant about the Court, a man of good quality, son to a knight baronet, and in high esteem with the best in that sphere, also a familiar friend of mine own, from whom, therefore, I had no reason to expect

any of that species of gibing which I had intimated my purpose to treat as offensive. Howbeit, it pleased him one night, at the Groom Porter's, being full of wine and waggery, to introduce this threadbare subject, and to say something concerning a goose-pie, which I could not but consider as levelled at me. Nevertheless, I did but calmly and solidly pray him to choose a different subject ; failing which, I let him know I should be sudden in my resentment. Notwithstanding, he continued in the same tone, and even aggravated the offence, by speaking of a tom-tit, and other unnecessary and obnoxious comparisons ; whereupon I was compelled to send him a cartel, and we met accordingly. Now, as I really loved the youth, it was my intention only to correct him by a flesh-wound or two ; and I would willingly that he had named the sword for his weapon. Nevertheless, he made pistols his election ; and being on horseback, he produced, by way of his own weapon, a foolish engine which children are wont, in their roguery, to use for spouting water ; a—a—in short I forget the name."

"A squirt, doubtless," said Peveril, who began to recollect having heard something of this adventure.

"You are right," said the dwarf ; "you have indeed the name of the little engine, of which I have had experience in passing the yards at West-

minster.—Well, sir, this token of slight regard compelled me to give the gentleman such language, as soon rendered it necessary for him to take more serious arms. We fought on horseback—breaking ground, and advancing by signal ; and, as I never miss aim, I had the misadventure to kill the Honourable Master Crofts at the first shot. I would not wish my worst foe the pain which I felt, when I saw him reel on his saddle, and so fall down to the earth !—and, when I perceived that the life-blood was pouring fast, I could not but wish to Heaven that it had been my own instead of his. Thus fell youth, hopes, and bravery, a sacrifice to a silly and thoughtless jest ; yet, alas ! wherein had I choice, seeing that honour is, as it were, the very breath in our nostrils ; and that in no sense can we be said to live, if we permit ourselves to be deprived of it ?”

The tone of feeling in which the dwarfish hero concluded his story, gave Julian a better opinion of his heart, and even of his understanding, than he had been able to form of one who gloried in having, upon a grand occasion, formed the contents of a pie. He was indeed enabled to conjecture that the little champion was seduced into such exhibitions, by the necessity attached to his condition, by his own vanity, and by the flattery bestowed on him by those who sought pleasure in practical jokes. The fate of the unlucky Master Crofts,

however, as well as various exploits of this diminutive person during the Civil Wars, in which he actually, and with great gallantry, commanded a troop of horse, rendered most men cautious of openly rallying him ; which was indeed the less necessary, as, when left alone, he seldom failed voluntarily to shew himself on the ludicrous side.

At one hour after noon, the turnkey, true to his word, supplied the prisoners with a very tolerable dinner, and a flask of well-flavoured, though light claret ; which the old man, who was something of a bon-vivant, regretted to observe, was nearly as diminutive as himself. The evening also passed away, but not without continued symptoms of garrulity on the part of Geoffrey Hudson.

It is true these were of a graver character than he had hitherto exhibited, for when the flask was empty, he repeated a long Latin prayer. But the religious act in which he had been engaged, only gave his discourse a more serious turn than belonged to his former themes, of war, lady's love, and courtly splendour.

The little Knight harangued, at first, on polemical points of divinity, and diverged from this thorny path, into the neighbouring and twilight walk of mysticism. He talked of secret warnings—of the predictions of sad-eyed prophets—of the visits of monitory spirits, and the Rosicrucian secrets of the Cabala ; all which topics he treated

of with such apparent conviction, nay, with so many appeals to personal experience, that one would have supposed him a member of the fraternity of gnomes, or fairies, whom he resembled so much in point of size.

In short, he persevered for a stricken hour in such a torrent of unnecessary tattle, as determined Peveril, at all events, to endeavour to procure a separate lodging. Having repeated his evening prayers in Latin, as formerly, (for the old gentleman was a Catholic,) he set off on a new score, as they were undressing ; and continued to prattle, until he had fairly talked both himself and his companion to sleep.

CHAP. XVII.

Of airy tongues that syllable men's names.

COMUS.

JULIAN had fallen asleep, with his brain rather filled with his own sad reflections, than with the mystical lore of the little Knight ; and yet it seemed as if in his visions the latter had been more present to his mind than the former.

He dreamed of gliding spirits, gibbering phantoms, bloody hands, which, dimly seen by twilight, seemed to beckon him forward like errant-knight on sad adventure bound. More than once he started from his sleep, so lively was the impression of these visions on his imagination ; and he always awaked under the impression that some one stood by his bed-side. The chillness of his ankles, the weight and clatter of the fetters, as he turned himself on his pallet, reminded him on these occasions where he was, and under what circumstances. The extremity to which he saw all that was dear to

him at present reduced, struck a deeper cold on his heart than the iron upon his limbs ; nor could he compose himself again to rest without a mental prayer to Heaven for protection. But when he had been for a third time awakened from repose by these thick-stirring fancies, his distress of mind vented itself in speech, and he was unable to suppress the almost despairing ejaculation, " God have mercy upon us !"

" Amen !" answered a voice as sweet and " soft as honey dew," which sounded as if the words were spoken close by his bed-side.

The natural inference was, that Geoffrey Hudson, his companion in calamity, had echoed the prayer which was so proper to the situation of both. But the tone of voice was so different from the harsh and dissonant sounds of the dwarf's enunciation, that Peveril was impressed with the certainty it could not proceed from Hudson. He was struck with involuntary terror, for which he could give no sufficient reason ; and it was not without an effort that he was able to utter the question, " Sir Geoffrey, did you speak ?"

No answer was returned. He repeated the question louder ; and the same silver-toned voice, which had formerly said "*Amen*" to his prayers, answered to his interrogatory, " Your companion will not awake while I am here."

" And who are you ?—What seek you ?—How

came you into this place ?” said Peveril, huddling, eagerly, question upon question.

“ I am a wretched being, but one who loves you well.—I come for your good.—Concern yourself no farther.”

It now rushed on Julian’s mind, that he had heard of persons possessed of the wonderful talent of counterfeiting sounds to such accuracy, that they could impose on their hearers the belief, that they proceeded from a point of the apartment entirely opposite to that which the real speaker occupied. Persuaded that he had now gained the depth of the mystery, he replied, “ This trifling, Sir Geoffrey, is unseasonable. Say what you have to say in your own voice and manner. These apish pleasantries do not become midnight in a Newgate dungeon.”

“ But the being who speaks with you,” answered the voice, “ is fitted for the darkest hour, and the most melancholy haunts.”

Impatient of suspense, and determined to satisfy his curiosity, Julian jumped at once from his pallet, hoping to secure the speaker, whose voice indicated he was so near. But he altogether failed in his attempt, and grasped nothing save thin air.

For a turn or two, Peveril shuffled at random about the room, with his arms extended ; and then

at last recollected, that with the impediment of his shackles, and the noise which necessarily accompanied his motions, and announced where he was, it would be impossible for him to lay hands on any one who might be disposed to keep out of his reach. He therefore endeavoured to return to his bed ; but, in groping for his way, lighted first on that of his fellow-prisoner. The little captive slept deep and heavy, as was evinced from his breathing ; and upon listening a moment, Julian became again certain, either that his companion was the most artful of ventriloquists and of dissemblers, or that there was actually within the precincts of that guarded chamber, some third being, whose very presence there seemed to intimate that it belonged not to the ordinary line of humanity.

Julian was no ready believer in the supernatural ; but that age was very far from being so incredulous concerning ghostly occurrences as our own ; and it was no way derogatory to his good sense, that he shared the prejudices of his time. His hair began to bristle, and the moisture to stand on his brow, as he called on his companion to awake, for Heaven's sake.

The dwarf answered—but he spoke without awaking,—“ The day may dawn and be d—d. Tell the master of the horse I will not go to the hunting, unless I have the little black jennet.”

“ I tell you,” said Julian, “ there is some one

in the apartment. Have you not a tinder-box to strike a light ?”

“ I care not how slight my horse be,” replied the slumberer, pursuing his own train of ideas, which, doubtless, carried him back to the green woods of Windsor, and the royal deer-hunts which he had witnessed there. “ I am not over-weight. —I will not ride that great Holstein brute, that I must climb up to by a ladder, and then sit like a pin-cushion on an elephant.”

Julian at length put his hand to the sleeper’s shoulder, and shook him, so as to awaken him from his dream ; when, after two or three snorts and groans, the dwarf asked, peevishly, what the devil ailed him ?

“ The devil himself, for what I know,” said Peveril, “ is at this very moment in the room beside us.”

The dwarf on this information started up, crossed himself, and began to hammer a flint and steel with all dispatch, until he had lighted a little piece of candle, which he said was consecrated to Saint Bridget, and as powerful as the herb called *fuga dæmonum*, or the liver of the fish burnt by Tobit in the house of Raguel, for chasing all goblins, and evil or dubious spirits, from the place of its radiance ; “ if, indeed,” as the dwarf carefully guarded his proposition, “ they existed anywhere, save in the imagination of his fellow-prisoner.”

Accordingly the apartment was no sooner enlightened by this holy candle's end, than Julian began to doubt the evidence of his own ears ; for not only was there no one in the room save Sir Geoffrey Hudson and himself, but all the fastenings of the door were so secure, that it seemed impossible that they could have been opened and again fixed, without a great deal of noise, which, on the last occasion at least, could not possibly have escaped his ears, seeing that he must have been on his feet, and employed in searching the chamber, when the unknown, if an earthly being, was in the act of retreating from it.

Julian gazed for a moment with great earnestness, and no little perplexity, first on the bolted door, then on the grated window ; and began to accuse his own imagination of having played him an unpleasant trick. He answered little to the questions of Hudson, and, returning to his bed, heard, in silence, a long studied oration on the merits of Saint Bridget, which comprehended the greater part of her long-winded legend, and concluded with the assurance, that, from all accounts preserved of her, that holy saint was the least of all possible women, except those of the pigmy kind.

By the time the dwarf had ceased to speak, Julian's desire of sleep had returned ; and after a few glances around the apartment, which was still illuminated by the expiring beams of the holy ta-

per, his eyes were again closed in forgetfulness, and his repose was not again disturbed in the course of that night.

Morning dawns on Newgate, as well as on the freest mountain-turf which Welchman or wild-goat ever trod ; but in so different a fashion, that the very beams of heaven's precious sun, when they penetrate into the recesses of the prison-house, have the air of being committed to jail. Still, with the light of day around him, Peveril easily persuaded himself of the vanity of his preceding night's visions ; and smiled when he reflected that fancies, similar to those to which his ear was often exposed in the Isle of Man, had been able to arrange themselves in a manner so impressive, when he heard them from the mouth of so singular a character as Hudson, and in the solitude of a prison.

Before Julian had awakened, the dwarf had already quitted his bed, and was seated in the chimney-corner of the apartment, where, with his own hands, he had arranged a morsel of fire, partly attending to the simmering of a small pot, which he had placed on the flame, partly occupied with a huge folio volume which lay on the table before him, and seemed well nigh as tall and bulky as himself. He was wrapped up in the dusky crimson cloak already mentioned, which served him for a morning-gown, as well as a mantle against the cold, and which corresponded with a large

monterò cap, that enveloped his head. The singularity of his features, and of the eyes, armed with spectacles, which were now cast on the subject of his studies, now directed towards his little caldron, would have tempted Rembrandt to exhibit him on canvass, either in the character of an alchemist, or of a necromancer, engaged in some strange experiment, under the direction of one of the huge manuals which treat of the theory of these mystic arts.

The attention of the dwarf was bent, however, upon a more domestic object. He was only preparing soup, of no unsavoury quality, for the breakfast, which he invited Peveril to partake with him. “I am an old soldier,” he said, “and, I must add, an old prisoner; and understand how to shift for myself better than you can do, young man.—Confusion to the scoundrel Clink, he has put the spice-box out of my reach!—Will you hand it me from the mantle-piece?—I will teach you, as the French have it, *faire la cuisine*; and then, if you please, we will divide, like brethren, the labours of our prison-house.”

Julian readily assented to the little man’s friendly proposal, without interposing any doubt as to his continuing an inmate of the same cell. Truth is, that although, upon the whole, he was inclined to regard the whispering voice of the preceding evening as the impression of his own excited fancy,

he felt, nevertheless, curiosity to see how a second night was to pass over in the same cell ; and the tone of the invisible intruder, which at midnight had been heard by him with terror, now excited on recollection a gentle and not unpleasing species of agitation—the combined effect of awe, and of awakened curiosity.

Days of captivity have little to mark them as they glide away. That which followed the night which we have described, afforded no circumstance of note. The dwarf imparted to his youthful companion a volume similar to that which formed his own studies, and which proved to be a tome of one of Scuderi's now forgotten romances, of which Geoffrey Hudson was a great admirer, and which were then very fashionable both at the French and English Courts ; although they contrive to unite in their immense folios all the improbabilities and absurdities of the old romances of chivalry, without that tone of imagination which pervades them, and all the metaphysical absurdities which Cowley and the poets of the age had heaped upon the passion of love, like so many load of small-coal upon a slender fire, which it smothers instead of aiding.

But Julian had no alternative, saving only to muse over the sorrows of Artamenes and Mandane, or on the complicated distresses of his own situa-

tion ; and in these disagreeable divertisements, the morning crept through as it could.

Noon first, and thereafter night-fall, were successively marked by a brief visit from their stern turnkey, who, with noiseless step and sullen demeanour, did in silence the necessary offices about the meals of the prisoners, exchanging with them as few words as an official in the Spanish Inquisition might have permitted himself upon a similar occasion. With the same taciturn gravity, very different from the laughing humour into which he had been surprised on a former occasion, he struck their fetters with a small hammer, to ascertain, by the sound thus produced, whether they had been tampered with by file or otherwise. He next mounted on a table, to make the same experiment on the window-grating.

Julian's heart throbbed ; for might not one of those grates have been so tampered with as to give entrance to the nocturnal visitant ? But they returned to the experienced ear of Master Clink, when he struck them in turn with the hammer, a clear and ringing sound, which assured him of their security.

" It would be difficult for any one to get in through these defences," said Julian, giving vent in words to his own feelings.

" Few wish that," answered the surly groom, misconstruing what was passing in Peveril's mind ;

“and let me tell you, master, folks will find it quite as difficult to get out.” He retired, and night came on.

The dwarf, who took upon himself for the day the whole duties of the apartment, trundled about the room, making a most important clutter as he extinguished their fire, and put aside various matters which had been in use in the course of the day, talking to himself all the while in a tone of no little consequence, occasionally grounded on the dexterity with which an old soldier could turn his hand to everything; and at other times, on the wonder that a courtier of the first rank should condescend to turn his hand to anything. Then came the repetition of his accustomed prayers; but his disposition to converse did not, as on the former occasion, revive after his devotions. On the contrary, long before Julian had closed an eye, the heavy breathing from Sir Geoffrey Hudson's pallet declared that the dwarf was already in the arms of Morpheus.

Amid the total darkness of the apartment, and with a longing desire, and at the same time no small fear, for the recurrence of the mysterious address of the preceding evening, Julian lay long awake, without his thoughts receiving any interruption, save when the clock told the passing hour from the neighbouring steeple of St Sepulchre. At length he sunk into slumber; but had not slept,

to his judgment, above an hour, when he was roused by the sound which his waking ear had so long expected in vain.

“Can you sleep?—Will you sleep?—Dare you sleep?” were the questions impressed on his ear, in the same clear, soft, and melodious voice, which had addressed him on the preceding night.

“Who is it asks me the question?” answered Julian. “But be the questioner good or evil, I reply that I am a guiltless prisoner; and that innocence may wish and dare to sleep soundly.”

“Ask no questions of me,” said the voice; “neither attempt to discover who speaks with you; and be assured that folly alone can sleep, with fraud around and danger before him.”

“Can you, who tell me of dangers, counsel me how to combat or how to avoid them?” said Julian.

“My power is limited,” said the voice; “yet something I can do, as a glow-worm can shew a precipice. But you must confide in me.”

“Confidence must beget confidence,” answered Julian. “I cannot repose trust in I know not what or whom.”

“Speak not so loud,” replied the voice, sinking almost into a whisper.

“Last night you said my companion would not awake,” said Julian.

“To-night I warrant not that he shall sleep,”

said the voice. And as it spoke, the hoarse, snatching, discordant tones of the dwarf were heard, demanding of Julian why he talked in his sleep—wherefore he did not rest himself, and let other people rest—and finally, whether his visions of last night were returned upon him again?

“ Say yes,” said the voice, in a whisper, so low, yet so distinct, that Julian almost doubted whether it was not an echo of his own thought,—“ Say but yes—and I part to return no more !”

In desperate circumstances men look to strange and unusual remedies ; and although unable to calculate the chances of advantage which this singular communication opened to him, Julian did not feel inclined to let them at once escape from him. He answered the dwarf, that he had been troubled by an alarming dream.

“ I could have sworn it, from the sound of your voice,” said Hudson. “ It is strange, now, that you overgrown men never possess the extreme firmness of nerves proper to us who are cast in a more compact mould. My own voice retains its masculine sounds on all occasions. Dr Cockerel was of opinion, that there was the same allowance of nerve and sinew to men of every size, and that nature spun the stock out thinner or stronger, according to the extent of surface which they were to cover. Hence, the least creatures are oftentimes the strongest. Place a beetle under a tall candlestick, and the

insect will move it by its efforts to get out ; which is, in point of comparative strength, as if one of us should shake his Majesty's prison of Newgate by similar struggles. Cats also, and weasels, are creatures of greater exertion and endurance than dogs or sheep. And in general, you may remark, that little men dance better, and are more unwearyed under exertion of every kind, than those to whom their own weight must necessarily be burdensome. I respect you, Master Peveril, because I am told you have killed one of those gigantic fellows, who go about swaggering as if their souls were taller than ours, because their noses are nearer to the clouds by a cubit or two. But do not value yourself on this, as anything very unusual. I would have you to know it hath been always thus ; and that, in the history of all ages, the clean, tight, dapper, little fellow, hath proved an overmatch for his bulky antagonist. I need only instance, out of holy writ, the celebrated downfall of Goliah, and of another lubbard, who had more fingers to his hand, and more inches to his stature, than ought to belong to an honest man, and who was slain by a nephew of good King David ; and of many others whom I do not remember ; nevertheless, they were all Philistines. And indeed you may observe, in sacred as well as profane history, that these giants are ever heretics and blasphemers, robbers and oppressors, outragers of the female

sex, and scoffers at regular authority. Such were Gog and Magog, whom our authentic chronicles vouch to have been slain near to Plymouth, by the good little Knight Corineus, who gave name to Cornwall. Ascaparte also was subdued by Bevis, and Colbrand by Guy, as Southampton and Warwick can testify. Such also was the giant Hoel, slain in Bretagne by King Arthur. And if Ryence, King of North Wales, who was done to death by the same worthy champion of Christendom, be not actually termed a giant, it is plain he was little better, since he required twenty-four kings' beards, which were then worn full and long, to fur his gown ; whereby, computing each beard at eighteen inches, (and you cannot allow less for a beard-royal,) and supposing only the front of the gown trimmed therewith, as we use ermine ; and that the back was mounted and lined, instead of cat-skins and squirrels' fur, with the beards of earls and dukes, and other inferior dignitaries—may amount to——But I will work the question to-morrow."

Nothing is more soporific to any but a philosopher or monied man, than the operation of figures ; and when in bed, the effect is irresistible. Sir Geoffrey fell asleep in the act of calculating King Ryence's height, from the supposed length of his mantle. Indeed, had he not stumbled on this abstruse subject of calculation, there is no guessing

how long he might have held forth upon the superiority of men of little stature, which was so great a favourite with him, that, numerous as such narratives are, the dwarf had collected almost all the instances of their victories over giants, which history or romance afforded.

No sooner had unequivocal signs of the dwarf's sound slumbers reached Julian's ears, than he began again to listen eagerly for the renewal of that mysterious communication which was at once interesting and awful. Even whilst Hudson was speaking, he had, instead of bestowing his attention upon his eulogy on persons of low stature, kept his ears on watchful guard, to mark, if possible, the lightest sounds of any sort which might occur in the apartment ; so that he thought it scarce possible that even a fly should have left it without its motion being overheard. If, therefore, his invisible monitor was indeed a creature of this world—an opinion which Julian's sound sense rendered him unwilling to renounce—that being could not have left the apartment ; and he waited impatiently for a renewal of their communication. He was disappointed ; not the slightest sound reached his ear ; and the nocturnal visitor, if still in the room, appeared determined on silence.

It was in vain that Peveril coughed, hemmed, and gave other symptoms of being awake ; at length, such became his impatience, that he resolved, at

any risk, to speak first, in hopes of renewing the communication betwixt them. "Whoever thou art," he said, in a voice loud enough to be heard by a waking person, but not so high as to disturb his sleeping companion—"Whoever, or whatsoever thou art, that hast shewn some interest in the fate of such a cast-away as Julian Peveril, speak once more, I conjure thee ; and, be your communication for good or evil, believe me, I am equally prepared to abide the issue."

No answer of any kind was returned to this invocation ; nor did the least sound intimate the presence of the being to whom it was so solemnly addressed.

"I speak in vain," said Julian ; "and perhaps I am but invoking that which is insensible of human feeling, or which takes a malign pleasure in human suffering."

There was a gentle and half-broken sigh from a corner of the apartment, which, answering to this exclamation, seemed to contradict the imputation which it conveyed.

Julian, naturally courageous, and familiarized by this time to his situation, raised himself in bed, and stretched out his arm, to repeat his adjuration, when the voice, as if alarmed at his action and energy, whispered, in a tone more hurried than that which it had hitherto used, "Be still—move not—or I am mute for ever !"

“ It is then a mortal being who is present with me,” was the natural inference of Julian, “ and one who is probably afraid of being detected ; I have then some power over my visitor, though I must be cautious how I use it.—If your intents are friendly,” he proceeded, “ there was never a time in which I lacked friends more, or would be more grateful for kindness. The fate of all who are dear to me is weighed in the balance, and with worlds would I buy the tidings of their safety.”

“ I have said my power is limited,” replied the voice. “ *You* I may be able to preserve—the fate of your friends is beyond my control.”

“ Let me at least know it,” said Julian ; “ and, be it as it may, I will not shun to share it.”

“ For whom would you inquire ?” said the soft, sweet voice, not without a tremulousness of accent, as if the question was put with diffident reluctance.

“ My parents,” said Julian, after a moment’s hesitation ; “ how fare they ?—What will be their fate ?”

“ They fare as the fort under which the enemy has dug a deadly mine. The work may have cost the labour of years, such were the impediments to the engineers ; but Time brings opportunity upon its wings.”

“ And what will be the event ?” said Peveril.

“ Can I read the future,” answered the voice,

“ save by comparison with the past ?—Who has been hunted on these stern and unmitigable accusations, but has been at last brought to bay ? Did high and noble birth, honoured age, and approved benevolence, save the unfortunate Lord Stafford ? Did learning, capacity of intrigue, or high Court favour, redeem Coleman, although the confidential servant of the heir presumptive of the Crown of England ?—Did subtlety and genius, and the exertions of a numerous sect, save Fenwicke, or Whitbread, or any other of the accused priests ?—Were Groves, Pickering, or the other wretches who have suffered, safe in their obscurity ? There is no condition in life, no degree of talent, no form of principle, which affords protection against an accusation, which levels conditions, confounds characters, renders men’s virtues their sins, and rates them as dangerous in proportion as they have influence, though attained in the noblest manner, and used for the best purposes. Call such a one but an accessory to the Plot—let him be mouthed in the evidence of Oates or Dugdale—and the blindest shall foresee the issue of their trial.”

“ Prophet of Evil !” said Julian, “ my father has a shield invulnerable to protect him. He is innocent.”

“ Let him plead his innocence at the bar of Heaven,” said the voice ; “ it will serve him little where Scroggs presides.”

“ Still I fear not,” said Julian, counterfeiting more confidence than he really possessed ; “ my father’s cause will be pleaded before twelve Englishmen.”

“ Better before twelve wild beasts,” answered the Invisible, “ than before Englishmen, influenced with party-prejudice, passion, and the epidemic terror of an imaginary danger.”

“ Ill-omened speaker,” said Julian, “ thine is indeed a voice fitted only to sound with the midnight bell, and the screech-owl. Yet speak again. Tell me, if thou canst”—(he would have said of Alice Bridgenorth, but the word would not leave his tongue)—“ Tell me,” he said, “ if the noble house of Derby——”

“ Let them keep their rock like the sea-fowl in the tempest ; and it may so fall out,” answered the voice, “ that their rock may be a safe refuge. But there is blood on their ermine ; and revenge has dogged them for many a year, like a blood-hound that hath been distanced in the morning chase, but may yet grapple the quarry ere the sun shall set. At present, however, they are safe.—Am I now to speak farther on your own affairs, which involve little short of your life and honour ? or are there yet any whose interests you prefer to your own ?”

“ There is,” said Julian, “ one, from whom I was violently parted yesterday ; if I knew but of her safety, I were little anxious for my own.”

“ One !” returned the voice, “ only *one* from whom you were parted yesterday ?”

“ But in parting from whom,” said Julian, “ I felt separated from all happiness which the world can give me.”

“ You mean Alice Bridgenorth,” said the Invisible, with some bitterness of accent ; “ but her you will never see more. Your own life and hers depend on your forgetting each other.”

“ I cannot purchase my own life at that price,” replied Julian.

“ Then DIE in your obstinacy,” returned the Invisible ; nor to all the entreaties which he used was he able to obtain another word in the course of that remarkable night.

CHAP. XVIII.

A short-hough'd man, but full of pride.

ALLAN RAMSAY.

THE blood of Julian Peveril was so much fevered by the state in which his invisible visitor left him, that he was unable, for a length of time, to find repose. He swore to himself, that he would discover and expose the nocturnal demon which stole on his hours of rest, only to add gall to bitterness, and to pour poison into those wounds which already smarted so severely. There was nothing which his power extended to, that, in his rage, he did not threaten. He proposed a closer and a more vigorous survey of his cell, so that he might discover the mode by which his tormentor entered, were it as unnoticeable as an augre-hole. If his diligence should prove unavailing, he determined to inform the jailors, to whom it could not be indifferent to know, that their prison was open to such intrusions. He proposed to himself, to discover from their looks, whether they were al-

ready privy to these visits ; and if so, to denounce them to the magistrates, to the judges, to the House of Commons, was the least that his resentment proposed. Sleep surprised his worn-out frame in the midst of his projects of discovery and vengeance, and, as frequently happens, the light of the ensuing day proved favourable to calmer resolutions.

He now reflected that he had no ground to consider the motives of his visitor as positively malevolent, although he had afforded him little encouragement to hope for assistance on the points he had most at heart. Towards himself, there had been expressed a decided feeling, both of sympathy and interest ; if through means of these he could acquire his liberty, he might, when possessed of freedom, turn it to the benefit of those for whom he was more interested than for his own welfare. " I have behaved like a fool," he said ; " I ought to have temporized with this singular being, learned the motives of its interference, and availed myself of its succour, provided I could do so without any dishonourable conditions. It would have been always time enough to reject such when they should have been proposed to me."

So saying, he was forming projects for regulating his intercourse with the stranger more prudently, in case their communication should be renewed, when his meditations were interrupted by

the peremptory summons of Sir Geoffrey Hudson, that he would, in his turn, be pleased to perform those domestic duties of their common habitation, which the dwarf had yesterday taken upon himself.

There was no resisting a requisite so reasonable, and Peveril accordingly rose and betook himself to the arrangement of their prison, while Sir Hudson, perched upon a stool from which his legs did not by half way reach the ground, sat in a posture of elegant languor, twangling upon an old broken-winded guitar, and singing songs in Spanish, Moorish, and *Lingua Franca*, most detestably out of tune. He failed not, at the conclusion of each ditty, to favour Julian with some account of what he had sung, either in the way of translation, or historical anecdote, or as the lay was connected with some peculiar part of his own eventful history, in the course of which the poor little man had chanced to have been taken by a Sallee rover, and carried captive into Morocco.

This part of his life Hudson used to make the era of many strange adventures ; and, if he could himself be believed, he had made wild work among the affections of the Emperor's seraglio. But, although few were in a situation to cross-examine him on gallantries and intrigues of which the scene was so remote, the officers of the garrison of Tangier had a report current amongst them, that the

only use to which the tyrannical Moors could convert a slave of such slender corporeal strength, was to employ him to lie a-bed all day and hatch turkey's eggs. The least illusion to this rumour used to drive him well nigh frantic, and the fatal termination of his duel with young Crofts, which began in wanton mirth, and ended in bloodshed, made men more coy than they had formerly been, of making the fiery little hero the subject of their raillery.

While Peveril did the drudgery of the apartment, the dwarf remained much at his ease, carolling in the manner we have described ; but when he beheld Julian attempting the task of the cook, Sir Geoffrey Hudson sprung from the stool on which he sat *en Signor*, at the risk of breaking both his guitar and his neck, exclaiming, " That he would rather prepare breakfast every morning betwixt this and the day of judgment, than commit a task of such consequence to such an inexperienced bungler as his companion."

The young man gladly resigned his task to the splenetic little Knight, and only smiled at his resentment when he added, that, to be but a mortal of middle stature, Julian was as stupid as a giant. Leaving him to prepare the meal after his own pleasure, Peveril employed himself in measuring the room with his eyes on every side, and in endeavouring to discover some private entrance, such

as might admit his midnight visitant, and perhaps could be employed in case of need for effecting his own escape. The floor next engaged a scrutiny equally minute, but more successful.

Close by his own pallet, and dropped in such a manner that he must have seen it sooner but for the hurry with which he obeyed the summons of the impatient dwarf, lay a slip of paper, sealed, and directed with the initial letters J. P., which seemed to ascertain that it was addressed to himself. He took the opportunity of opening it while the soup was in the very moment of projection, and the full attention of his companion was occupied by what he, in common with wiser and taller men, considered as one of the principal occupations of life; so that, without incurring his observation, or awakening his curiosity, Julian had the opportunity to read as follows :—

“ Rash and infatuated as you are, there is one who would forfeit much to stand betwixt you and your fate. You are to-morrow to be removed to the Tower, where your life cannot be assured for a single day ; for, during the few hours you have been in London, you have provoked a resentment which is not easily slaked. There is but one chance for you,—renounce A. B.—think no more of her. If that be impossible, think of her but as one whom you can never see again. If your heart can re-

solve to give up an attachment which it should never have entertained, and which it would be madness to cherish longer, make your acquiescence in this condition known by putting on your hat a white band, or white feather, or knot of ribbon of the same colour, whichever you may most easily come by. A boat will, in that case, run, as if by accident, on board of that which is to convey you to the Tower. Do you in the confusion jump overboard, and swim to the Southwark side of the Thames. Friends will attend there to secure your escape, and you will find yourself with one who will rather lose character and life, than that a hair of your head should fall to the ground ; but who, if you reject the warning, can only think of you as of the fool who perishes in his folly. May Heaven guide you to a sound judgment of your condition ! So prays one who would be your friend, if you would,

“ UNKNOWN.”

The Tower !—it was a word of terror, even more so than a civil prison ; for how many passages to death did that dark structure present ? The severe executions which it had witnessed in preceding reigns, were not perhaps so numerous as the privy murders which had taken place within its walls ; yet Peveril did not a moment hesitate on the part which he had to perform. “ I

will share my father's fate," he said ; " I thought but of him when they brought me hither ; I will think of nothing else when they convey me to yonder still more dreadful place of confinement ; it is his, and it is but meet that it should be his son's. —And thou, Alice Bridgenorth, the day that I renounce thee, may I be held alike a traitor and a dastard !—Go, false adviser, and share the fate of seducers and heretical teachers."

He could not help uttering this last expression aloud, as he threw the billet into the fire, with a vehemence which made the dwarf start with surprise. " What say you of burning heretics, young man ?" he exclaimed ; " by my faith, your zeal must be warmer than mine, if you talk on such a subject when the heretics are the prevailing number. May I measure six feet without my shoes, but the heretics would have the best of it if we came to that work. Beware of such words."

" Too late to beware of words spoken," said the turnkey, who, opening the door with unusual precautions to avoid noise, had stolen unperceived into the room ; " however, Master Peveril has behaved like a gentleman, and I am no tale-bearer, condition he will consider I have had trouble in his matters."

Julian had no alternative but to take the fellow's hint and administer a bribe, with which Master Clink was so well satisfied, that he exclaimed,

“ It went to his heart to take leave of such a kind-natured gentleman, and that he could have turned the key on him for twenty years with pleasure. But the best friends must part.”

“ I am to be removed, then ?” said Julian.

“ Ay, truly, master, the warrant is come from the Council.”

“ To convey me to the Tower.”

“ Whew !” exclaimed the officer of the law—
“ who the devil told you that ? But since you do know it, there is no harm to say ay. So make yourself ready to move immediately ; and first, hold out your dew-beaters till I take off the darbies.”

“ Is that usual ?” said Peveril, stretching out his feet as the fellow directed, while his fetters were unlocked.

“ Why, ay, master, these fetters belong to the keeper ; they are not a-going to send them to the Lieutenant, I trow. No, no, the warders must bring their own gear with them ; they get none here, I promise them. Nevertheless, if your honour hath a fancy to go in fetters, as thinking it may move compassion of your case——”

“ I have no intention to make my case seem worse than it is,” said Julian, whilst, at the same time, it crossed his mind that his anonymous correspondent must be well acquainted both with his own personal habits, since the letter proposed a

plan of escape which could only be executed by a bold swimmer, and with the fashions of the prison, since it was foreseen that he would not be ironed on his passage to the Tower. The turnkey's next speech made him carry conjecture still farther.

"There is nothing in life I would not do for so brave a guest," said Clink; "I could nab one of my wife's ribbons for you, if your honour had the fancy to mount the white flag in your beaver."

"To what good purpose?" said Julian, shortly connecting, as was natural, the man's proposed civility with the advice given and the signal prescribed in the letter.

"Nay, to no good purpose I know of," said the turnkey; "only it is the fashion to seem white and harmless—a sort of token of not-guiltiness, as I may say, which folks desire to shew whether they be guilty or not; but I cannot say that guiltiness or not-guiltiness argues much, saving they be words in the vardict."

"Strange," thought Peveril, although the man seemed to speak quite naturally, and without any double meaning, "strange that all should apparently combine to realize the plan of escape, could I but give my consent to it! And had I not better consent? Whoever does so much for me must wish me well, and a well-wisher would never enforce the unjust conditions on which I am required to consent to my liberation."

But this misgiving of his resolution was but for a moment. He speedily recollected, that whosoever aided him in escaping, must be necessarily exposed to great risk, and had a right to name the stipulation on which he was willing to incur it. He also recollected that falsehood is equally base, whether expressed in words or in dumb show ; and that he would lie as flatly by using the signal agreed upon in evidence of his renouncing Alice Bridgenorth, as he would in direct terms if he made such renunciation without the purpose of abiding by it.

“ If you would oblige me,” he said to the turnkey, “ let me have a piece of black silk or crape for the purpose you mention.”

“ Of crape,” said the fellow ; “ what should that signify ? Why, the bien morts, who bing out to tour at you, will think you a chimney-sweeper on May-day.”

“ It will shew my settled sorrow,” said Julian, “ as well as my determined resolution.”

“ As you will, sir,” answered the fellow ; “ I’ll provide you with a black rag of some kind or other. So, now, let us be moving.”

Julian intimated his readiness to attend him, and proceeded to bid farewell to his late companion, the stout Geoffrey Hudson. The parting was not without emotion on both sides, more particularly on that of the poor little man, who had taken a particular liking to the companion of

whom he was now about to be deprived. "Fare ye well," he said, "my young friend," taking Julian's hand in both his own uplifted palms, in which action he somewhat resembled the attitude of a sailor pulling a rope overhead,—“Many a one in my situation would think himself wronged, as a soldier and servant of the king's chamber, in seeing you removed to a more honourable prison than that which I am limited unto. But, I thank God, I grudge you not the Tower, nor the Rocks of Scilly, nor even Carisbrooke Castle, though the latter was graced with the captivity of my blessed and martyred master. Go where you will, I wish you all the distinction of an honourable prison-house, and a safe and speedy deliverance in God's own time. For myself, my race is near a close, and that because I fall a martyr to the over-tenderness of my own heart. There is a circumstance, good Master Julian Peveril, which should have been yours, had Providence permitted our farther intimacy, but it fits not the present hour. Go, then, my friend, and bear witness in life and death, that Geoffrey Hudson scorns the insults and persecutions of fortune, as he would despise, and has often despised, the mischievous pranks of an overgrown school-boy.”

So saying, he turned away, and hid his face with his little handkerchief, while Julian felt towards him that tragi-comic sensation which makes us pity the object which excites it, not the less

that we are somewhat inclined to laugh amid our sympathy. The jailor made him a signal, which Peveril obeyed, leaving the dwarf to disconsolate solitude.

As Julian followed the keeper through the various windings of this penal labyrinth, the man observed, that "he was a rum fellow, that little Sir Geoffrey, and, for gallantry, a perfect Cock of Bantam, for as old as he was. There was a certain gay wench," he said, "that had hooked him; but what she could make of him, save she carried him to Smithfield, and took money for him, as for a motion of puppets, it was," he said, "hard to gather."

Encouraged by this opening, Julian asked if his attendant knew why his prison was changed. "To teach you to become a King's post without commission," answered the fellow.

He stopped in his tattle as they approached that formidable central point, in which lay couched on his leathern elbow-chair the fat commander of the fortress, stationed apparently for ever in the midst of his citadel, as the huge Boa is sometimes said to lie stretched as a guard upon the subterranean treasures of eastern Rajahs. This overgrown man of authority eyed Julian wistfully and sullenly, as the miser the guinea which he must part with, or the hungry mastiff the food which is carried to another kennel. He growled to himself as he turned

the leaves of his ominous register, in order to make the necessary entry respecting the removal of his prisoner. "To the Tower—to the Tower—ay, ay, all must to the Tower—that's the fashion of it—free Britons to a military prison, as if we had neither bolts nor chains here!—I hope Parliament will have it up, this Towering work, that's all.—Well, the youngster will take no good by the change, and that is one comfort."

Having finished at once his official act of registration, and his soliloquy, he made a signal to his assistants to remove Julian, who was led along the same stern passages which he had traversed upon his entrance, to the gate of the prison, whence a coach, escorted by two officers of justice, conveyed him to the water-side.

A boat here waited him, with four warders of the Tower, to whose custody he was formally resigned by his late attendants. Clink, however, the turnkey, with whom he was more specially acquainted, did not take leave of him without furnishing him with the piece of black crape which he requested. Peveril fixed it on his hat amid the whispers of his new guardians. "The gentleman is in a hurry to go into mourning," said one; "mayhap he had better wait till he has cause."

"Perhaps others may wear mourning for him, ere he can mourn for any one," answered another of these functionaries.

Yet, notwithstanding the tenor of these whispers, their behaviour to their prisoner was more respectful than he had experienced from his former keepers, and might be termed a sullen civility. The ordinary officers of the law were in general rude, as having to do with felons of every description ; whereas these men were only employed with persons accused of state crimes—men who were from birth and circumstances usually entitled to expect, and able to reward, recent usage.

The change of keepers passed unnoticed by Julian, as did the gay and busy scene presented by the broad and beautiful river on which he was now launched. A hundred boats shot past them, bearing parties intent upon business, or upon pleasure. Julian only viewed them with the stern hope, that whosoever had endeavoured to bribe him from his fidelity by the hope of freedom, might see, from the colour of the badge which he had assumed, how determined he was to resist the temptation presented to him.

It was about high water, and a stout wherry came up the river, with sail and oar, so directly upon that in which Julian was embarked, that it seemed as if likely to run her aboard. “ Get your carabines ready,” cried the principal warder to his assistants. “ What the devil can these scoundrels mean ?”

But the crew in the other boat seemed to have

perceived their error, for they suddenly altered their course, and struck off into the middle stream, while a torrent of mutual abuse was exchanged betwixt them and the boat whose course they had threatened to impede.

“ The Unknown has kept his faith,” said Julian to himself ; “ I too have kept mine.”

It even seemed to him, as the boats neared each other, that he heard, from the other wherry, something like a stifled scream or groan ; and when the momentary bustle was over, he asked the warder who sat next him, what boat that was.

“ Men-of-war’s-men on a frolic, I suppose,” answered the warder. “ I know no one else would be so impudent as run foul of the King’s boat ; for I am sure the fellow put the helm up on purpose. But mayhap you, sir, know more of the matter than I do.”

This insinuation effectually prevented Julian from putting farther questions, and he remained silent until the boat came under the dusky bastions of the Tower. The tide carried them up under a dark and lowering arch, closed at the upper end by the well-known Traitors’ gate, formed like a wicket of huge intersecting bars of wood, through which might be seen a dim and imperfect view of soldiers and warders upon duty, and of the steep ascending causeway which leads up from the river into the interior of the fortress. By this

gate,—and it is the well-known circumstance which assigned its name,—those accused of state crimes were usually committed to the Tower. The Thames afforded a secret and silent mode of conveyance for transporting thither such whose fallen fortunes might move the commiseration, or whose popular qualities might excite the sympathy, of the public; and even where no especial secrecy existed, the peace of the city was undisturbed by the tumult attending the passage of the prisoner and his guards through the most public streets.

Yet this custom, however recommended by state policy, must have often struck chill upon the heart of the criminal, who thus, stolen, as it were, out of society, reached the place of his confinement, without encountering even one glance of compassion on the road; and as, from under the dusky arch, he landed on those flinty steps, worn by many a footstep anxious as his own, against which the tide lapped fitfully with small successive waves, and thence looked forward to the steep ascent into a Gothic state-prison, and backward to such part of the river as the low-brow'd vault suffered to become visible, he must often have felt that he was leaving day-light, hope, and life itself, behind him.

While the warder's challenge was made and answered, Peveril endeavoured to obtain information from his conductors where he was likely to be

confined ; but the answer was brief and general—
“ Where the Lieutenant should direct.”

“ Could he not be permitted to share the imprisonment of his father, Sir Geoffrey Peveril ?” He forgot not, on this occasion, to add the surname of his house.

The warder, an old man of respectable appearance, stared, as if at the extravagance of the demand, and said bluntly, “ It is impossible.”

“ At least,” said Peveril, “ shew me where my father is confined, that I may look upon the walls which separate us.”

“ Young gentleman,” said the senior warder, shaking his grey head, “ I am sorry for you ; but asking questions will do you no service. In this place we know nothing of fathers and sons.”

Yet chance seemed, in a few minutes afterwards, to offer Peveril that satisfaction which the rigour of his keepers was disposed to deny to him. As he was conveyed up the steep passage which leads under what is called the Wakefield Tower, a female voice, in a tone wherein grief and joy were indescribably mixed, exclaimed, “ My son !—My dear son !”

Even those who guarded Julian seemed softened by a tone of such acute feeling. They slackened their pace. They almost paused to permit him to look up towards the casement from which the sounds of maternal agony proceeded ; but the aper-

ture was so narrow, and so closely grated, that nothing was visible save a white female hand, which grasped one of those rusty barricadoes, as if for supporting the person within, while another streamed a white handkerchief, and then let it fall. The casement was instantly deserted.

“ Give it me,” said Julian to the officer who lifted the handkerchief ; “ it is perhaps a mother’s last gift.”

The old warder lifted the napkin, and looked at it with the jealous minuteness of one who is accustomed to detect secret correspondence in the most trifling acts of intercourse.

“ There may be writing on it with invisible ink,” said one of his comrades.

“ It is wetted, but I think it is only with tears,” answered the senior. “ I cannot keep it from the poor young gentleman.”

“ Ah, Master Coleby,” said his comrade, in a gentle tone of reproach, “ you would have been wearing a better coat than a yeoman’s to-day, had it not been for your tender heart.”

“ It signifies little,” said old Coleby, “ while my heart is true to my King, what I feel in discharging my duty, or what coat keeps my old bosom from the cold weather.”

Peveril, meanwhile, folded in his breast the token of his mother’s affection which chance had favoured him with ; and when placed in the small and

solitary chamber which he was told to consider as his own during his residence in the Tower, he was soothed even to weeping by this trifling circumstance, which he could not help considering as an omen, that his unfortunate house was not entirely deserted by Providence.

But the thoughts and occurrences of a prison are too uniform for a narrative, and we must now convey our readers into a more bustling scene.



CHAP. XIX.

Henceforth 'tis done—Fortune and I are friends ;
And I must live, for Buckingham commends.

POPE.

THE spacious mansion of the Duke of Buckingham, with the demesne belonging to it, originally bore the name of York House, and occupied a large portion of the ground adjacent to the Savoy.

This had been laid out by the munificence of his father, the favourite of Charles the First, in a most splendid manner, so as almost to rival Whitehall itself. But during the increasing rage for building new streets, and almost an additional town, in order to connect London and Westminster, this ground had become of very great value ; and the second Duke of Buckingham, who was at once fond of scheming, and needy of money, had agreed to a plan laid before him by some adventurous architect, for converting the extensive grounds around his palace into those streets, lanes, and courts,

which still perpetuate his name and titles; though those who live in Buckingham Street, Duke Street, Villiers' Street, or in Of-alley, (for even that connecting particle is locally commemorated,) probably think seldom of the memory of the witty, eccentric, and licentious George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, whose titles are preserved in the names of their residence and its neighbourhood.

This building-plan the Duke had entered upon with all the eagerness which he usually attached to novelty. His gardens were destroyed—his pavilions levelled—his splendid stables demolished—the whole pomp of his suburban demesne laid waste, cumbered with ruins, and intersected with the foundations of new buildings and cellars, and the process of levelling different lines for the intended streets. But the undertaking, although it proved afterwards both lucrative and successful, met with a check at the outset, partly from want of the necessary funds, partly from the impatient and mercurial temper of the Duke, which soon carried him off in pursuit of some more new object. So that, though much was demolished, very little, in comparison, was reared up in the stead, and nothing was completed. The principal part of the ducal mansion still remained uninjured; but the demesne in which it stood bore a strange analogy to the irregular mind of its noble owner. Here stood a beautiful group of exotic trees and shrubs,

the remnant of the garden, amid yawning common-sewers and heaps of rubbish. In one place an old tower threatened to fall upon the spectator; and in another, he ran the risk of being swallowed up by a modern vault. Grandeur of conception could be discovered in the undertaking, but was almost everywhere marred by poverty or negligence of execution. In short, the whole place was the true emblem of an understanding and talents run to waste, and become more dangerous than advantageous to society, by the want of steady principle, and the improvidence of the possessor.

There were men who took a different view of the Duke's purpose in permitting his mansion to be thus surrounded, and his demesne occupied by modern buildings which were incomplete, and ancient which were but half demolished. They alleged, that, engaged as he was in so many mysteries of love and of politics, and having the character of the most daring and dangerous intriguer of his time, his Grace found it convenient to surround himself with this ruinous arena, into which officers of justice could not penetrate without some difficulty and hazard; and which might afford, upon occasion, a safe and secret shelter for such tools as were fit for desperate enterprizes, and a private and unobserved mode of access to those

whom he might have any special reason for receiving in secret.

Leaving Peveril in the Tower, we must once more convey our readers to the Levee of the Duke, who, upon the morning of Julian's transference to that fortress, thus addressed his minister-in-chief, and principal attendant :—" I have been so pleased with your conduct in this matter, Jerningham, that if Old Nick were to arise in our presence, and offer me his best imp as a familiar in thy room, I would hold it but a poor compliment."

" A legion of imps," said Jerningham, bowing, " could not have been more busy than I in your Grace's service ; but if your Grace will permit me to say so, your whole plan was well nigh marred by your not returning home till last night, or rather this morning."

" And why, I pray you, sage Master Jerningham," said his Grace, " should I have returned home an instant sooner than my pleasure and convenience served ?"

" Nay, my Lord Duke," replied the attendant, " I know not ; only, when you sent us word by Empson, at Chiffinch's apartment, to command us to make sure of the girl at any rate, and at all risks, you said you would be here so soon as you could get freed of the King."

" Freed of the King, you rascal ! What sort of phrase is that ?" demanded the Duke.

“ It was Empson who used it, my lord, as coming from your Grace.”

“ There is much very fit for my Grace to say, that misbecomes such mouths as his or yours to repeat,” answered the Duke, haughtily, but instantly resumed his tone of familiarity, for his humour was as capricious as his pursuits. “ But I know what thou would’st have ; first, your wisdom would know what became of me since thou had’st my commands at Chiffinch’s ; and next, your valour would fain sound another flourish of trumpets on thine own most artificial retreat, leaving thy comrade in the hands of the Philistines.”

“ May it please your Grace,” said Jerningham, “ I did but retreat for the preservation of the baggage.”

“ What ! do you play at crambo with me ?” said the Duke. “ I would have you know that the common parish fool should be whipt, were he to attempt to pass pun or quodlibet as a genuine jest, even amongst ticket-porters and hackney-chairmen.”

“ And yet I have heard your Grace indulge in the *jeu de mots*,” answered the attendant.

“ Sirrah Jerningham,” answered the patron, “ discard thy memory, or keep it under correction, else it will hamper thy rise in the world. Thou may’st have seen me have a fancy to play at trap-ball, or to kiss a serving-wench, or to guzzle

ale and eat toasted cheese in a porterly whimsy ; but is it fitting thou should'st remember such follies ? No more on't.—Hark you ; how came the long lubberly fool, Jenkins, to suffer himself to be run through the body so simply by a rustic swain like this same Peveril ?”

“ Please your Grace, this same Corydon is no such novice. I saw the onset ; and, except in one hand, I never saw a sword managed with such life, grace, and facility.”

“ Ay, indeed ?” said the Duke, taking his own sheathed rapier in his hand, “ I could not have thought that. I am somewhat rusted, and have need of breathing. Peveril is a name of note. As well go to Barns-elms, or behind Montagu House, with him as with another. His father a rumoured plotter too. The public would have noted it in me as becoming a zealous Protestant. Needful I do something to maintain my good name in the city, to atone for non-attendance on prayer and preaching. But your Laertes is fast in the Fleet ; and I suppose his blundering blockhead of an antagonist is dead or dying.”

“ Recovering, my lord, on the contrary,” replied Jerningham ; “ the blade fortunately avoided his vitals.”

“ D—n his vitals !” answered the Duke. “ Tell him to postpone his recovery, or I will put him to death in earnest.”

“I will caution his surgeon,” said Jerningham, “which will answer equally well.”

“Do so ; and tell him he had better be on his own death-bed as cure his patient till I send him notice.—That young fellow must be let loose again at no rate.”

“There is little danger,” said the attendant. “I hear some of the witnesses have got their net flung over him on account of some matters down in the north ; and that he is to be translated to the Tower for that, and for some letters of the Countess of Derby, as rumour goes.”

“To the Tower let him go, and get out as he can,” replied the Duke ; “and when you hear he is fast there, let the fencing fellow recover as fast as the surgeon and he can mutually settle it.”

The Duke, having said this, took two or three turns in the apartment, and appeared to be in deep thought. His attendant waited the issue of his meditations with patience, being well aware that such moods, during which his mind was strongly directed in one point, were never of so long duration with his patron as to prove a severe burden to his own patience.

Accordingly, after the silence of seven or eight minutes, the Duke broke through it, taking from the toilette a large silk purse, which seemed full of gold. “Jerningham,” he said, “thou art a faithful fellow, and it would be sin not to cherish thee.

I beat the King at Mall on his bold defiance. The honour is enough for me ; and thou, my boy, shalt have the winnings."

Jerningham pocketed the purse with due acknowledgments.

"Jerningham," his Grace continued, "I know you blame me for changing my plans too often ; and on my soul I have heard you so learned on the subject, that I have become of your opinion, and have been vexed at myself for two or three hours together, for not sticking as constantly to one object, as doubtless I shall, when age (touching his forehead) shall make this same weathercock too rusted to turn with the changing breeze. But as yet, while I have spirit and action, let it whirl like the vane at the mast-head, which teaches the pilot how to steer his course ; and when I shift mine, think I am bound to follow fortune, and not to control her."

"I can understand nothing from all this, please your Grace," replied Jerningham, "saving that you have changed some purposed measures, and think that you have profited by doing so."

"You shall judge yourself," replied the Duke. "I have seen the Duchess of Portsmouth.—You start. It is true, by Heaven ! I have seen her, and from sworn enemies we have become sworn friends. The treaty between such high and mighty powers had some weighty articles ; besides, I had

a French negotiator to deal with ; so that you will allow a few hours' absence was but a necessary interval to make up our matters of diplomacy."

"Your Grace astonishes me," said Jerningham. "Christian's plan of supplanting the great lady is then entirely abandoned? I thought you had but desired to have the fair successor here, in order to carry it on under your own management."

"I forget what I meant at the time," said the Duke ; "unless that I was resolved she should not jilt me as she did the good-natured man of royalty ; and so I am still determined, since you put me in mind of the fair Dowsabelle. But I had a contrite note from the Duchess while we were at the Mall. I went to see her, and found her a perfect Niobe.—On my soul, in spite of red eyes and swelled features, and dishevelled hair, there are, after all, Jerningham, some women, who do, as the poets say, look lovely in affliction. Out came the cause ; and with such humility, such penitence, such throwing herself on my mercy, (she the proudest devil, too, in the whole Court,) that I must have had heart of steel to resist it all. In short, Chiffinch in a drunken fit had played the babbler, and let young Saville into our intrigue. Saville plays the rogue, and informs the Duchess by a messenger, who luckily came a little late into the market. She learned, too, being a very devil for intelligence, that there had been some jarring be-

tween the master and me about this new Phillis ; and that I was most likely to catch the bird,—as any one may see who looks on us both. It must have been Empson who fluted all this into her Grace's ear ; and thinking she saw how her ladyship and I could hunt in couples, she entreats me to break Christian's scheme, and keep the wench out of the King's sight, especially if she were such a rare piece of perfection as fame has reported her."

" And your Grace has promised her your hand to uphold the influence which you have so often threatened to ruin ?" said Jerningham.

" Ay, Jerningham ; my turn was as much served when she seemed to own herself in my power, and cry me mercy.—And observe, it is all one to me which ladder I climb by into the King's cabinet. That of Portsmouth is ready fixed—better ascend by it than fling it down to put up another—I hate all unnecessary trouble."

" And Christian ?" said Jerningham.

" May go to the devil for a self-conceited ass. One pleasure of this twist of intrigue is, to revenge me of that villain, who thought himself so essential, that, by Heaven ! he forced himself on my privacy, and lectured me like a school-boy. Hang the cold-blooded hypocritical vermin ! If he mutters, I will have his nose slit as wide as Coventry's.—Hark ye, is the Colonel come ?"

“ I expect him every moment, your Grace.”

“ Send him up when he arrives,” said the Duke.
——“ Why do you stand looking at me ? What would you have ?”

“ Your Grace’s direction respecting the young lady,” said Jerningham.

“ Odd zooks,” said the Duke, “ I had totally forgotten her.—Is she very tearful ?—Exceedingly afflicted ?”

“ She does not take on so violently as I have seen some do,” said Jerningham ; “ but, for a strong, firm, concentrated indignation, I have seen none to match her.”

“ Well, we will permit her to cool. I will not face the affliction of a second fair-one immediately. I am tired of snivelling, and swelled eyes, and blubbered cheeks, for some time ; and, moreover, must husband my powers of consolation. Begone, and send the Colonel.”

“ Will your Grace permit me one other question ?” demanded his confidant.

“ Ask what thou wilt, Jerningham, and then be gone.”

“ Your Grace has determined to give up Christian,” said the attendant. “ May I ask what becomes of the kingdom of Man ?”

“ Forgotten, as I have a Christian soul !” said the Duke ; “ as much forgotten as if I had never nourished that scheme of royal ambition.—D—n

it, we shall knit up the ravelled skean of that intrigue.—Yet it is but a miserable rock, not worth the trouble I have been bestowing on it ; and for a kingdom—it has a sound indeed ; but, in reality, I might as well stick a cock-chicken's feather into my hat, and call it a plume. Besides, now I think upon it, it would scarce be honourable to sweep that petty royalty out of Derby's possession. I won a thousand pieces of the young Earl when he was last here, and suffered him to hang about me at Court. I question if the whole revenue of his kingdom is worth twice as much. Easily I could win it of him, were he here, with less trouble than it would cost me to carry on these troublesome intrigues of Christian's."

" If I may be permitted to say so, please your Grace," answered Jerningham, " if you are somewhat liable to change your mind, no man in England can better afford reasons for doing so."

" I think so myself, Jerningham," said the Duke; " and perhaps it is one reason for my changing. One likes to vindicate their own conduct, and to find out fine reasons for doing what one has a mind to.—And now, once again, begone. Or, hark ye—hark ye—I shall need some loose gold. You may leave the purse I gave you ; and I will give you an order for as much, and two years' interest, on old Jacob Doublefee."

" As your Grace pleases," said Jerningham, his

whole stock of complaisance scarcely able to conceal his mortification at exchanging for a distant order, of a kind which of late had not been very regularly honoured, the sunny contents of the purse which had actually been in his pocket. Secretly but solemnly did he make a vow, that two years' interest alone should not be the compensation for this involuntary exchange in the form of his remuneration.

As the discontented dependant left the apartment, he met, at the head of the grand staircase, Christian himself, who, exercising the freedom of an ancient friend of the house, was making his way, unannounced, to the Duke's dressing apartment. Jerningham, conjecturing that his visit at this crisis would be anything save well-timed, or well-taken, endeavoured to avert his purpose, by asserting that the Duke was indisposed, and in his bed-chamber; and this he said so loud that his master might hear him, and, if he pleased, realize the apology which he offered in his name, by retreating into the bed-room as his last sanctuary, and drawing the bolt against intrusion.

But, far from adopting a stratagem to which he had had recourse on former occasions, in order to avoid those who came upon him, though at an appointed hour, and upon business of importance, Buckingham called, in a loud voice, from his dressing-apartment, commanding his chamberlain in-

stantly to introduce his good friend Master Christian, and censuring him for hesitating for an instant to do so.

“ Now,” thought Jerningham within himself, “ if Christian knew the Duke as well as I do, he would sooner stand the leap of a lion, like the London ’prentice bold, than venture on my master at this moment, who is even now in a humour nearly as dangerous as the animal.”

He then ushered Christian into his master’s presence, taking care to post himself within ear-shot of the door.

CHAP. XX.

“ Speak not of niceness, when there’s chance of wreck,”
The captain said, as ladies writhed their neck
To see the dying dolphin flap the deck :
“ If we go down, on us these gentry sup ;
We dine upon them, if we haul them up.
Wise men applaud us when we eat the eaters,
As the devil laughs when keen folks cheat the cheaters.”

The Sea Voyage.

THERE was nothing in the Duke’s manner towards Christian which could have conveyed to that latter personage, experienced as he was in the worst possible ways of the world, that Buckingham would, at that particular moment, rather have seen the devil than himself ; unless it was that Buckingham’s reception of him, being rather extraordinarily courteous towards so old an acquaintance, might have excited some degree of suspicion.

Having escaped with some difficulty from the vague region of general compliments, which bears the same relation to that of business that Milton informs us the *Limbo Patrum* bears to the sensible and material earth, Christian asked his Grace

of Buckingham, with the same blunt plainness with which he usually veiled a very deep and artificial character, whether he had lately seen Chiffinch or his help-mate?

“Neither of them lately,” answered Buckingham. “Have not you waited on them yourself?—I thought you would have been more anxious about the great scheme.”

“I have called once and again,” said Christian, “but I can gain no access to the sight of that important couple. I begin to be afraid they are paltering with me.”

“Which, by the welkin and its stars, you would not be slow in avenging, Master Christian. I know your puritanical principles on that point well,” said the Duke. “Revenge may be well said to be sweet, when so many grave and wise men are ready to exchange for it all the sugar-plums which pleasure offers to the poor sinful people of the world.”

“You may jest, my lord,” said Christian, “but still——”

“But still you will be revenged on Chiffinch, and his little commodious companion. And yet the task may be difficult—Chiffinch has so many ways of obliging his master—his little woman is such a convenient pretty sort of a screen, and has such winning little ways of her own, that, in faith, in your case, I would not meddle with them. What

is this refusing their door, man? We all do it to our best friends now and then, as well as to duns and dull company."

"If your Grace is in a humour of rambling thus wildly in your talk," said Christian, "you know my old faculty of patience—I can wait till it be your pleasure to talk more seriously."

"Seriously!" said his Grace—"Wherefore not?—I only wait to know what your serious business may be."

"In a word, my lord, from Chiffinch's refusal to see me, and some vain calls which I have made at your Grace's mansion, I am afraid either that our plan has miscarried, or that there is some intention to exclude me from the further conduct of the matter." Christian pronounced these words with considerable emphasis.

"That were folly, as well as treachery," returned the Duke, "to exclude from the spoil the very engineer who conducted the attack. But hark ye, Christian—I am sorry to tell bad news without preparation; but as you insist on knowing the worst, and are not ashamed to suspect your best friends, out it must come—Your niece left Chiffinch's house the morning before yesterday."

Christian staggered, as if he had received a severe blow; and the blood ran to his face in such a current of passion, that the Duke concluded he was struck with an apoplexy. But, exerting the

extraordinary command which he could maintain under the most trying circumstances, he said, with a voice, the composure of which had an unnatural contrast with the alteration of his countenance, "Am I to conclude, that in leaving the protection of the roof in which I placed her, the girl has found shelter under that of your Grace?"

"Sir, the supposition does my gallantry more credit than it deserves."

"Oh, my Lord Duke," answered Christian, "I am not one whom you can impose on by this species of courtly jargon. I know of what your Grace is capable; and that to gratify the caprice of a moment, you would not hesitate to disappoint even the schemes at which you yourself have laboured most busily.—Suppose this jest played off. Take your laugh at those simple precautions by which I intended to protect your Grace's interest, as well as that of others. Let us know the extent of your frolic, and consider how far its consequences can be repaired."

"On my word, Christian," said the Duke, laughing, "you are the most obliging of uncles and of guardians. Let your niece pass through as many adventures as Boccaccio's bride of the King of Garba, you care not. Pure or soiled, she will still make the footstool of your fortune."

An Indian proverb says, that the dart of contempt will even pierce through the shell of the

tortoise ; but this is more peculiarly the case when conscience tells the subject of the sarcasm that it is justly merited. Christian, stung with Buckingham's reproach, at once assumed a haughty and threatening mien, totally inconsistent with that in which sufferance seemed to be as much his badge as that of Shylock. " You are a foul-mouthed and most unworthy lord," he said ; " and as such I will proclaim you, unless you make reparation for the injury you have done me."

" And what," said the Duke of Buckingham, " shall I proclaim *you*, that can give you the least title to notice from such as I am ? What name shall I bestow on the little transaction which has given rise to such unexpected misunderstanding ?"

Christian was silent, either from rage or from mental conviction.

" Come, come, Christian," said the Duke, smiling, " we know too much of each other to make a quarrel safe. Hate each other we may—circumvent each other—it is the way of Courts—but proclaim !—a fico for the phrase."

" I used it not," said Christian, " till your Grace drove me to extremity. You know, my lord, I have fought both at home and abroad ; and you should not rashly think that I will endure any indignity which blood can wipe away."

" On the contrary," said the Duke, with the same civil and sneering manner, " I can confident-

ly assert, that the life of half a score of your friends would seem very light to you, Christian, if their existence interfered, I do not say with your character, but with any advantage which their existence might intercept.—Fie upon it, man, we have known each other long. I never thought you a coward ; and am only glad to see I could strike a few sparkles of heat out of your cold and constant disposition. I will now, if you please, tell you at once the fate of the young lady, in which I pray you to believe that I am truly interested.”

“ I hear you, my Lord Duke,” said Christian. “ The curl of your upper-lip, and your eyebrow, does not escape me. Your Grace knows the French proverb, ‘ He laughs best who laughs last.’ But I hear you.”

“ Thank Heaven you do,” said Buckingham ; “ for your case requires haste, I promise you, and involves no laughing matter. Well then, hear a simple truth, on which (if it became me to offer any pledge for what I assert to be such) I could pledge life, fortune, and honour. It was the morning before last, when meeting with the King at Chiffinch’s unexpectedly—in fact I had looked in to fool an hour away, and to learn how your scheme advanced—I saw a singular scene. Your niece terrified little Chiffinch—(the hen Chiffinch, I mean ;) bid the King defiance to his teeth, and walked out of the presence triumphantly, under

the guardianship of a young fellow of little mark or likelihood, excepting a tolerable personal presence, and the advantage of a most unconquerable impudence. Egad, I can hardly help laughing to think how the King and I were both baffled ; for I will not deny, that I had tried to trifle for a moment with the fair Indamora. But, egad, the young fellow swooped her off from under our noses, like my own Drawcansir clearing off the banquet from the two Kings of Brentford. There was a dignity in the gallant's swaggering retreat which I must try to teach Mohun ; it will suit his part admirably."

" This is incomprehensible, my Lord Duke," said Christian, who by this time had recovered all his usual coolness ; " you cannot expect me to believe this. Who dared be so bold as to carry off my niece in such a manner, and from so august a presence ? And with whom, a stranger as he must have been, would she, wise and cautious as I know her,—would she have consented to depart in such a manner ?—My lord, I cannot believe this."

" One of your priests, my most devout Christian," replied the Duke, " would only answer, Die, infidel, in thine unbelief ; but I am only a poor worldling sinner, and will add what mite of information I can. The young fellow's name, as I am given to understand, is Julian, son of Sir Geoffrey, whom men call Peveril of the Peak."

“ Peveril of the Devil, who hath his cavern there !” said Christian, warmly ; “ for I know that gallant, and believe him capable of anything bold and desperate. But how could he intrude himself into the royal presence ? Either Hell aids him, or Heaven looks nearer into mortal dealings than I have yet believed. If so, may God forgive us, who deemed he thought not on us at all !”

“ Amen, most christian Christian,” replied the Duke. “ I am glad to see thou hast yet some touch of grace that leads thee to augur so. But Empson, the hen Chiffinch, and half a dozen more, saw the swain’s entrance and departure. Please examine these witnesses with your own wisdom, if you think your time may not be better employed in tracing the fugitives. I believe he gained entrance as one of some dancing or masking party. Rowley, you know, is accessible to all who will come forth to make him sport. So in stole this termagant tearing gallant, like Samson among the Philistines, to pull down our fine scheme about our ears.”

“ I believe you, my lord,” said Christian ; “ I cannot but believe you ; and I forgive you, since it is your nature, for making sport of what is ruin and destruction. But which way did they take ?”

“ To Derbyshire, I should presume, to seek her father,” said the Duke. “ She spoke of going into the paternal protection, instead of yours, Master

Christian. Something had chanced at Chiffinch's, to give her cause to suspect that you had not altogether provided for his daughter in the manner which her father was like to approve of."

"Now, Heaven be praised," said Christian, "she knows not her father is come to London! and they must be gone down either to Martindale Castle, or to Moultrassie Hall; in either case they are in my power—I must follow them close. I will return instantly to Derbyshire—I am undone if she meet her father until these errors are amended. Adieu, my lord. I forgive the part which I fear your Grace must have had in baulking our enterprize—it is no time for mutual reproaches."

"You speak truth, Master Christian," said the Duke, "and I wish you all success. Can I help you with men or horses, or money?"

"I thank your Grace," said Christian, and hastily left the apartment.

The Duke watched his descending footsteps on the staircase, until they could be heard no longer, and then exclaimed to Jerningham, who entered, "*Victoria! victoria! magna est veritas et praevalabit!*—Had I told the villain a word of a lie, he is so familiar with all the regions of falsehood—his whole life has been such an absolute imposture, that I had stood detected in an instant; but I told him truth, and that was the only means of deceiving him. Victoria! my dear Jerningham, I

am prouder of cheating Christian, than I should have been of circumventing a minister of state."

"Your Grace holds his wisdom very high," said the attendant.

"His cunning, at least, I do, which, in Court affairs, often takes the weather-gage of wisdom,—as in Yarmouth Roads a herring-buss will baffle a frigate. He shall not return to London if I can help it, until all these intrigues are over."

As his Grace spoke, the Colonel, after whom he had repeatedly made inquiry, was announced by a gentleman of his household. "He met not Christian, did he?" said the Duke hastily.

"No, my lord," returned the domestic, "the Colonel came by the old garden staircase."

"I judged as much," replied the Duke; "'tis an owl that will not take wing in daylight, when there is a thicket left to skulk under. Here he comes from threading lane, vault, and ruinous alley, very near as ominous a creature as the fowl of ill augury which he resembles."

The Colonel, to whom no other appellation seemed to be given, than that which belonged to his military station, now entered the apartment. He was tall, strongly built, and past the middle period of life, and his countenance, but for the heavy cloud which dwelt upon it, might have been pronounced a handsome one. While the Duke spoke to him, either from humility or some other cause, his large

serious eye was cast down upon the ground ; but he raised it when he answered, with a keen look of earnest observation. His dress was very plain, and more allied to that of the Puritans than of the Cavaliers of the time ; a shadowy black hat like the Spanish sombrero, a large black mantle or cloak, and a long rapier, gave him something the air of a Castilione, to which his gravity and stiffness of demeanour added considerable strength.

“ Well, Colonel,” said the Duke, “ we have been long strangers—how have matters gone with you ? ”

“ As with other men of action in quiet times,” answered the Colonel, “ or as a good war-caper that lies high and dry in a muddy creek, till seams and planks are rent and riven.”

“ Well, Colonel,” said the Duke, “ I have used your valour before now, and I may again ; so that I shall speedily see that the vessel is careened, and undergoes a thorough repair.”

“ I conjecture, then,” said the Colonel, “ that your Grace has some voyage in hand ? ”

“ No, but there is one which I want to interrupt,” replied the Duke.

“ 'Tis but another stave of the same tune.—Well, my lord, I listen,” answered the stranger.

“ Nay, it is but a trifling matter after all.—You know Ned Christian ? ”

“ Ay, surely, my lord,” replied the Colonel, “ we have been long known to each other.”

“ He is about to go down to Derbyshire to seek a certain niece of his, whom he will scarcely find there. Now, I trust to your tried friendship, to interrupt his return to London. Go with him, or meet him, cajole him, or assail him, or do what thou wilt with him—only keep him from London for a fortnight at least, and then I care little how soon he comes.”

“ For then, I suppose,” replied the Colonel, “ any one may find the wench that thinks her worth the looking for.”

“ Thou mayest think her worth the looking for thyself, Colonel ; I promise you she hath many a thousand stitched to her petticoat ; such a wife would save thee from skeldering on the public.”

“ My lord, I sell my blood and my sword, but not my honour,” answered the man sullenly ; “ if I marry, my bed may be a poor, but it shall be an honest one.”

“ Then thy wife will be the only honest matter in thy possession, Colonel—at least since I have known you,” replied the Duke.

“ Why, truly, your Grace may speak your pleasure on that point. It is chiefly your business which I have done of late ; and if it were less strictly honest than I could have wished, the employer was to blame as well as the agent. But for marrying a cast-off mistress, the man (saving your

Grace, to whom I am bound) lives not who dares propose it to me."

The Duke laughed loudly. "Why, this is mine Ancient Pistol's vein," he replied.

—" Shall I Sir Pandarus of Troy become,
And by my side wear steel?—then Lucifer take all!"

" My breeding is too plain to understand ends of playhouse verse, my lord," said the Colonel sulkily. " Has your Grace no other service to command me?"

" None—only I am told you have published a Narrative concerning the Plot."

" What should ail me, my lord?" said the Colonel; " I hope I am a witness as competent as any that has yet appeared?"

" Truly, I think so to the full," said the Duke; " and it would have been hard, when so much profitable mischief was going, if so excellent a Protestant as yourself had not come in for a share."

" I came to take your Grace's commands, not to be the object of your wit," said the Colonel.

" Gallantly spoken, most resolute and most immaculate Colonel! As you are to be on full pay in my service for a month to come, I pray your acceptance of this purse, for contingents and equipments, and you shall have my instructions from time to time."

" They shall be punctually obeyed, my lord,"

said the Colonel ; “ I know the duty of a subaltern officer. I wish your Grace a good morning.”

So saying, he pocketed the purse, without either affecting hesitation, or expressing gratitude, but merely as a part of a transaction in the regular way of business, and stalked from the apartment with the same sullen gravity which marked his entrance. “ Now, there goes a scoundrel after my own heart,” said the Duke ; “ a robber from his cradle, a murderer since he could hold a knife, a profound hypocrite in religion, and a worse and deeper hypocrite in honour,—would sell his soul to the devil to accomplish any villainy, and would cut the throat of his brother, did he dare to give the villainy he had so acted its right name.—Now, why stand you amazed, good Master Jerningham, and look on me as you would on some monster of Ind, when you had paid your shilling to see it, and were staring out your pennyworth with your eyes as round as a pair of spectacles ? Wink, man, and save them, and then let thy tongue untie the mystery.”

“ On my word, my Lord Duke,” answered Jerningham, “ since I am compelled to speak, I can only say, that the longer I live with your Grace, I am the more at a loss to fathom your motives of action. Others lay plans, either to attain profit or pleasure by their execution ; but your Grace’s delight is to counteract your own schemes, when

in the very act of performance ; like a child—forgive me—that breaks its favourite toy, or a man who should set fire to the house he has half built.”

“ And why not, if he wanted to warm his hands at the blaze ?” said the Duke.

“ Ay, my lord,” replied his dependant ; “ but what if, in doing so, he should burn his fingers ?—My lord, it is one of your noblest qualities, that you will sometimes listen to the truth without taking offence ; but were it otherwise, I could not, at this moment, help speaking out at every risk.”

“ Well, say on, I can bear it,” said the Duke, throwing himself into an easy chair, and using his toothpick with graceful indifference and equanimity ; “ I love to hear what such potsherds as thou art, think of the proceedings of us who are of the pure porcelain clay of the earth.”

“ In the name of Heaven, my lord, let me then ask you,” said Jerningham, “ what merit you claim, or what advantage you expect, from having embroiled everything in which you are concerned to a degree, which equals the chaos of the blind old Roundhead’s poem which your Grace is so fond of ? To begin with the King. In spite of good humour, he will be incensed at your repeated rivalry.”

“ His Majesty defied me to it.”

“ You have lost all hopes of the Isle, by quarrelling with Christian.”

“ I have ceased to care a farthing about it,” replied the Duke.

“ In Christian himself, whom you have insulted, and to whose family you intend dishonour, you have lost a sagacious, artful, and cool-headed instrument and adherent,” said the monitor.

“ Poor Jerningham !” answered the Duke ; “ Christian would say as much for thee, I doubt not, wert thou discarded to-morrow. It is the common error of such tools to think themselves indispensable. As to his family, what was never honourable cannot be dishonoured by any connection with my house.”

“ I say nothing of Chiffinch,” said Jerningham, “ offended as he will be when he learns why, and by whom, his scheme has been ruined, and the lady spirited away—He and his wife, I say nothing of them.”

“ You need not,” said the Duke ; “ for were they even fit persons to speak to me about, the Duchess of Portsmouth has bargained for their disgrace.”

“ Then this bloodhound of a Colonel, as he calls himself, your Grace cannot even lay *him* on a quest which is to do you service, but you must do him such indignity, at the same time, as he will not fail to remember, and be sure to fly at your throat should he ever have an opportunity of turning on you.”

“ I will take care he has none,” said the Duke ; “ and yours, Jerningham, is a low-lived apprehension. Beat your spaniel heartily if you would have him under command. Ever let your agents see you know what they are, and prize them accordingly. A rogue, who must needs be treated as a man of honour, is apt to get above his work. Enough, therefore, of your advice and censure, Jerningham ; we differ in every particular. Were we both engineers, you would spend your life in watching some old woman’s wheel, which spins flax by the ounce ; I must be in the midst of the most varied and counteracting machinery, regulating checks and counterchecks, balancing weights, proving springs and wheels, directing and controlling a hundred combined powers.”

“ And your fortune, in the meanwhile ?” said Jerningham ; “ pardon this last hint, my lord.”

“ My fortune,” said the Duke, “ is too vast to be hurt by a petty wound ; and I have, as thou knowest, a thousand salves in store for the scratches and scars which it sometimes receives in greasing my machinery.”

“ Your Grace does not mean Dr Wilderhead’s powder of projection ?”

“ Pshaw ! he is a quacksalver and mountebank.”

“ Or Solicitor Drowndland’s plan for draining the fens ?”

“ He is a cheat,—*videlicet*, an attorney.”

“ Or the Laird of Lackpelf’s sale of Highland woods ?”

“ He is a Scotchman,” said the Duke,—“ *videlicet*, both cheat and beggar.”

“ These streets here, upon the site of your noble mansion-house ?” said Jerningham.

“ The architect’s a bite, and the plan’s a bubble. I am sick of the sight of this rubbish, and I will soon replace our old alcoves, alleys, and flower-plots, by an Italian garden and a new palace.”

“ That, my lord, would be to waste, not to improve your fortune,” said his domestic.

“ Clodpate, and muddy spirit that thou art, thou hast forgot the most hopeful scheme of all—the South Sea Fisheries—their stock is up 50 per cent already. Post down to the Alley, and tell old Manasses to buy L.20,000 for me.—Forgive me, Plutus, I forgot to lay my sacrifice on thy shrine, and yet expected thy favours !—Fly post haste, Jerningham—for thy life, for thy life, for thy life !”

With hands and eyes uplifted, Jerningham left the apartment ; and the Duke, without thinking a moment further on old or new intrigues—on the friendship he had formed, or the enmity he had provoked—on the beauty whom he had carried off from her natural protectors, as well as from her lover—or on the monarch against whom he had placed himself in rivalry,—sat down to calculate chances with all the zeal of Demoivre, tired of the

drudgery in half an hour, and refused to see the zealous agent whom he had employed in the city, because he was busily engaged in writing a new lampoon.

CHAP. XXI.

Ah ! changeful head, and fickle heart !

Progress of Discontent.

No event is more ordinary in narratives of this nature, than the abduction of the female on whose fate the interest is supposed to turn ; but that of Alice Bridgenorth was thus far particular, that she was spirited away by the Duke of Buckingham, more in contradiction than in the rivalry of passion ; and that, as he made his first addresses to her at Chiffinch's, rather in the spirit of rivalry to his Sovereign, than from any strong impression which her beauty had made on his affections, so he had formed the sudden plan of spiriting her away by means of his dependants, rather to perplex Christian, the King, Chiffinch, and all concerned, than because he had any particular desire for her society at his own mansion. Indeed, so far was this from being the case, that his Grace was rather surprised than delighted with the success of the enterprize which had made her an inmate

there, although it is probable he might have thrown himself into an uncontrollable passion, had he learned its miscarriage instead of its success.

Twenty-four hours passed over since he had returned to his own roof, before, notwithstanding sundry hints from Jerningham, he could even determine on the exertion necessary to pay his fair captive a visit; and then it was with the internal reluctance of one who can only be stirred from indolence by novelty.

“I wonder what made me plague myself about this wench,” said he, “and doom myself to encounter all the hysterical rhapsodies of a country Phillis, with her head stuffed with her grandmother’s lessons about virtue and the Bible-book; when the finest and best-bred women in town may be had upon more easy terms. It is a pity one cannot mount the victor’s car of triumph without having a victory to boast of; yet, faith, it is what most of our modern gallants do, though it would not become Buckingham.—Well, I must see her,” he concluded, “though it were but to rid the house of her. The Portsmouth will not hear of her being set at liberty near Charles, so much is she afraid of a new fair seducing the old sinner from his allegiance. So how the girl is to be disposed of—for I shall have little fancy to keep her down here, and she is too wealthy to be sent down to Clief-

den as a housekeeper—is a matter to be thought on.”

He then called for such a dress as might set off his natural good mien—a compliment which he considered as due to his own merit; for as to anything farther, he went to pay his respects to his fair prisoner with almost as little zeal in the cause, as a gallant to fight a duel in which he has no warmer interest than the maintenance of his reputation as a man of honour.

The set of apartments consecrated to the use of those favourites who occasionally made Buckingham's mansion their place of abode, and who were, so far as liberty was concerned, often required to observe the regulations of a convent, was separated from the rest of the Duke's extensive mansion. He lived in the age when what was called gallantry warranted the most atrocious actions of deceit and violence; as may be best illustrated by the catastrophe of an unfortunate actress, whose beauty attracted the attention of the last De Vere, Earl of Oxford. While her virtue defied his seductions, he ruined her under colour of a mock marriage, and was rewarded for a success which occasioned the death of his victim, by the general applause of the men of wit and gallantry who filled the drawing-room of Charles.

Buckingham had made provision in the interior of his ducal mansion for exploits of a similar na-

ture ; and the set of apartments which he now visited were alternately used to confine the reluctant, and to accommodate the willing.

Being now used for the former purpose, the key was delivered to the Duke by a hooded and spectacled old lady, who sat reading a devout book in the outer hall which divided these apartments (usually called the Nunnery) from the rest of the house. This experienced dowager acted as mistress of the ceremonies on such occasions, and was the trusty depository of more intrigues than were known to any dozen of her worshipful calling besides.

“ As sweet a linnet,” she said, as she undid the outward door, “ as ever sung in a cage.”

“ I was afraid she might have been more for moping than for singing, Dowlas,” said the Duke.

“ Till yesterday she was so, please your Grace,” answered Dowlas ; “ or to speak sooth, till early this morning, we heard of nothing but Lachrymæ. But the air of your noble Grace’s house is favourable to singing birds ; and to-day matters have been a-much mended.”

“ ’Tis sudden, dame,” said the Duke ; “ and ’tis something strange, considering that I have never seen her, that the pretty trembler should have been so soon reconciled to its fate.”

“ Ah, your Grace has such magic that it communicates itself to your very walls ; as wholesome

scripture says, Exodus, first and seventh, ‘It cleaveth to the walls and the door-posts.’ ”

“ You are too partial, Dame Dowlas,” said the Duke of Buckingham.

“ Not a word but truth,” said the dame ; “ and I wish I may be an outcast from the fold of the lambs, but I think this damsel’s very frame has changed since she was under your Grace’s roof. Methinks she hath a lighter form, a finer step, a more displayed ankle—I cannot tell, but I think there is a change. But, lack-a-day, your Grace knows I am as old as I am trusty, and that my eyes wax something uncertain.”

“ Especially when you wash them with a cup of canary, Dame Dowlas,” answered the Duke, who was aware that temperance was not amongst the cardinal virtues which were most familiar to the old lady’s practice.

“ Was it canary, your Grace said ?—Was it indeed with canary, that your Grace should have supposed me to have washed my eyes ?” said the offended matron. “ I am sorry that your Grace should know me no better.”

“ I crave your pardon, dame,” said the Duke, shaking aside, fastidiously, the grasp which, in the earnestness of her exculpation, Madam Dowlas had clutched upon his sleeve. “ I crave your pardon. Your nearer approach has convinced me of my

erroneous imputation—I should have said nantz, not canary.”

So saying, he walked forward into the inner apartments, which were fitted up with an air of voluptuous magnificence.

“The dame said true, however,” said the proud deviser and proprietor of the splendid mansion—
“A country Phillis might well reconcile herself to such a prison as this, even without a skilful bird-fancier to touch a bird-call. But I wonder where she can be, this rural Phidele. Is it possible she can have retreated, like a despairing commandant, into her bed-chamber, the very citadel of the place, without even an attempt to defend the out-works?”

As he made this reflection, he passed through an anti-chamber and little eating parlour, exquisitely furnished, and hung with excellent paintings of the Venetian school.

Beyond these lay a withdrawing-room, fitted up in a style of still more studied elegance. The windows were studiously darkened with painted glass, of such a deep and rich colour, as made the mid-day beams, which found their way into the apartment, imitate the rich colours of sunset; and, in the celebrated expression of the poet, “taught light to counterfeit a gloom.”

Buckingham’s feelings and taste had been too much, and too often, and too readily gratified, to

permit him, in the general case, to be easily accessible even to those pleasures which it had been the business of his life to pursue. The hackneyed voluptuary is like the jaded epicure, the mere listlessness of whose appetite becomes at length a sufficient penalty for having made it the principal object of his enjoyment and cultivation. Yet novelty has always some charms, and uncertainty has more.

The doubt how he was to be received—the change of mood which his prisoner was said to have evinced—the curiosity to know how such a creature as Alice Bridgenorth had been described, was likely to bear herself under the circumstances in which she was so unexpectedly placed, had upon Buckingham the effect of exciting unusual interest. On his own part, he had none of those feelings of anxiety with which a man, even of the most vulgar mind, comes to the presence of the female whom he wishes to please, far less the more refined sentiments of love, respect, desire, and awe, with which the more refined lover approaches the beloved object. He had been, to use an expressive French phrase, too completely *blasé* even from his earliest youth, to permit him now to experience the animal eagerness of the one, far less the more sentimental pleasure of the other. It is no small aggravation of this jaded and uncomfortable state of mind, that the voluptuary cannot renounce the

pursuits with which he is satiated, but must continue, for his character's sake, or from the mere force of habit, to take all the toil, fatigue, and danger of the chase, while he has so little real interest in the termination.

Buckingham, therefore, felt it due to his reputation as a successful hero of intrigue, to pay his addresses to Alice Bridgenorth with dissembled eagerness; and as he opened the door of the inner apartment, he paused to consider, whether the tone of gallantry, or that of passion, was fittest to use on the occasion. This delay enabled him to hear a few notes of a lute, touched with exquisite skill, and accompanied by the still sweeter strains of a female voice, which, without executing any complete melody, seemed to sport itself in rivalry of the silver sound of the instrument.

"A creature so well educated," said the Duke, "with the sense she is said to possess, would, rustic as she is, laugh at the assumed rants of Oroondates. It is the vein of Dorimont—once, Buckingham, thine own—that must here do the feat, besides that the part is easier."

So thinking, he entered the room with that easy grace which characterized the gay courtiers among whom he flourished, and approached the fair tenant, whom he found seated near a table covered with books and music, and having on her left hand the large half-open casement, dim with stained

glass, admitting only a doubtful light into this lordly retiring-room, which, hung with the richest tapestry of the Gobelines, and ornamented with piles of china and splendid mirrors, seemed like a bower built for a prince to receive his bride.

The splendid dress of the inmate corresponded with the taste of the apartment which she occupied, and partook of the oriental fashion which the much-admired Roxalana had then brought into fashion. A slender foot and ankle, which escaped from the wide trowser of richly ornamented and embroidered blue satin, was the only part of her person distinctly seen ; the rest was enveloped, from head to foot, in a long veil of silver gauze, which, like a feathery and light mist on a beautiful landscape, suffered you to perceive that what it concealed was rarely lovely, yet induced the imagination even to enhance the charms it shaded. Such part of the dress as could be discovered, was, like the veil and the trowsers, in the oriental taste ; a rich turban, and splendid caftan, were rather indicated than distinguished through the folds of the former. The whole attire argued at least coquetry on the part of a fair one, who must have expected, from her situation, a visitor of some pretension ; and induced Buckingham to smile internally at Christian's account of the extreme simplicity and purity of his niece.

He approached the lady *en cavalier*, and ad-

dressed her with the air of being conscious, while he acknowledged his offences, that his condescending to do so formed a sufficient apology for them. "Fair Mistress Alice," he said, "I am sensible how deeply I ought to sue for pardon for the mistaken zeal of my servants, who, seeing you deserted and exposed without protection during an unlucky affray, took it upon them to bring you under the roof of one who would expose his life rather than suffer you to sustain a moment's anxiety. Was it my fault that those around me should have judged it necessary to interfere for your preservation; or that, aware of the interest I must take in you, they have detained you till I could myself, in personal attendance, receive your commands?"

"That attendance has not been speedily rendered, my lord," answered the lady. "I have been a prisoner for two days—neglected, and left to the charge of menials."

"How say you, lady?—Neglected!" exclaimed the Duke. "By Heaven, if the best in my household has failed in his duty, I will discard him on the instant!"

"I complain of no lack of courtesy from your servants, my lord," she replied; "but methinks it had been but complaisant in the Duke himself to explain to me earlier wherefore he has had the boldness to detain me as a state prisoner."

“ And can the divine Alice doubt,” said Buckingham, “ that, had time and space, those cruel enemies to the flight of passion, given permission, the instant in which you crossed your vassal’s threshold had seen its devoted master at your feet, who hath thought, since he saw you, of nothing but the charms which that fatal morning placed before him at Chiffinch’s ?”

“ I understand then, my lord,” said the lady, “ that you have been absent, and have had no part in the restraint which has been exercised upon me ?”

“ Absent on the King’s command, lady, and employed in the discharge of his duty,” answered Buckingham, without hesitation. “ What could I do ?—The moment you left Chiffinch’s, his Majesty commanded me to the saddle in such haste, that I had no time to change my satin buskins for riding-boots. If my absence has occasioned you a moment of inconvenience, blame the inconsiderate zeal of those, who, seeing me depart from London, half distracted at my separation from you, were willing to contribute their unmannered, though well-meant exertions, to preserve their master from despair, by retaining the fair Alice within his reach. To whom, indeed, could they have restored you ? He whom you selected as your champion is in prison, or fled—your father absent from town—your uncle in the north. To Chiffinch’s house you had

expressed your well-founded aversion ; and what fitter asylum remained than that of your devoted slave, where you must ever reign a queen ?”

“ An imprisoned one,” said the lady. “ I desire not such royalty.”

“ Alas ! how wilfully you misconstrue me !” said the Duke, kneeling on one knee ; “ and what right can you have to complain of a few hours’ gentle restraint—you, who destine so many to hopeless captivity ! Be merciful for once, and withdraw that envious veil ; for the divinities are ever most cruel when they deliver their oracles from such clouded recesses. Suffer at least my rash hand——”

“ I will save your Grace that unworthy trouble,” said the lady, haughtily ; and rising up, she flung back over her shoulders the veil which shrouded her, saying, at the same time, “ Look on me, my Lord Duke, and see if these be indeed the charms which have made on your Grace an impression so powerful.”

Buckingham did look ; and the effect produced on him by surprise was so strong, that he rose hastily from his knee, and remained for a few seconds as if he had been petrified. The figure that stood before him had neither the height nor the rich shape of Alice Bridgenorth ; and, though perfectly well made, was so slightly formed, as to seem almost infantine. Her dress was three or four short vests of embroidered satin, disposed one

over the other, of different colours, or rather different shades of similar colours; for strong contrast was carefully avoided. These opened in front, so as to shew part of the throat and neck, partially obscured by an inner covering of the finest lace; over the uppermost vest was worn a sort of mantle, or coat of rich fur. A small but magnificent turban was carelessly placed on her head, from under which flowed a profusion of coal-black tresses, which Cleopatra might have envied. The taste and splendour of the eastern dress corresponded with the complexion of the lady's face, which was brunette, of a shade so dark as might almost have served an Indian.

Amidst a set of features, in which rapid and keen expression made amends for the want of regular beauty, the essential points of eyes as bright as diamonds, and teeth as white as pearls, did not escape the Duke of Buckingham, a professed connoisseur in female charms. In a word, the fanciful and singular female who thus unexpectedly produced herself before him, had one of those faces which are never seen without making an impression; which, when removed, are long after remembered; and for which, in our idleness, we are tempted to invent a hundred histories, that we may please our fancy by supposing them under the influence of different kinds of emotion. Every one must have in recollection countenances of this

kind, which, from a captivating and stimulating originality of expression, abide longer in the memory, and are more seductive to the imagination, than even regular beauty.

“ My Lord Duke,” said the lady, “ it seems the lifting of my veil has done the work of magic upon your Grace. Alas, for the captive princess, whose nod was to command a vassal so costly as your Grace ! She runs, methinks, no slight chance of being turned out of doors, like a second Cinderella, to seek her fortune among lacqueys and lightermen.”

“ I am astonished !” said the Duke. “ That villain, Jerningham—I will have the scoundrel’s blood !”

“ Nay, never abuse Jerningham for the matter,” said the Unknown ; “ but lament your own unhappy engagements. While you, my Lord Duke, were posting northward, in white satin buskins, to toil in the King’s affairs, the right and lawful princess sat weeping in sables in the uncheered solitude to which your absence condemned her. Two days she was disconsolate in vain ; on the third came an African enchantress to change the scene for her, and the person for your Grace. Methinks, my lord, this adventure will tell but ill, when some faithful squire shall recount or record the gallant adventures of the second Duke of Buckingham.”

“ Fairly bit, and bantered to boot,” said the Duke—“ the monkey has a turn for satire, too, by all that is *piquante*.—Hark ye, fair Princess, how dared you adventure on such a trick as you have been accomplice to ?”

“ Dare, my lord !” answered the stranger ; “ put the question to others, not to one who fears nothing.”

“ By my faith, I believe so ; for thy front is bronzed by nature.—Hark ye once more, mistress—What is your name and condition ?”

“ My condition I have told you—I am a Mauritanian sorceress by profession, and my name is Zarah,” replied the eastern maiden.

“ But methinks that face, shape, and eyes—” said the Duke,—“ when didst thou pass for a dancing fairy ?—Some such imp thou wert, not many days since.”

“ My sister you may have seen—my twin sister ; but not me, my lord,” answered Zarah.

“ Indeed,” said the Duke, “ that duplicate of thine, if it was not thy very self, was possessed with a dumb spirit, as thou with a talking one. I am still in the mind that you are the same ; and that Satan, always so powerful with your sex, had art enough, on our former meeting, to make thee hold thy tongue.”

“ Believe what you will of it, my lord, it cannot change the truth.—And now, my lord, I bid

you farewell. Have you any commands to Mauritania ?”

“Tarry a little, my Princess,” said the Duke ; “and remember, that you have voluntarily entered yourself as pledge for another ; and by any penalty which it is my pleasure to exact. None must brave Buckingham with impunity.”

“I am in no hurry to depart, if your Grace hath any commands for me.”

“What ! are you neither afraid of my resentment, nor of my love, fair Zarah ?” said the Duke.

“Of neither, by this glove,” answered the lady. “Your resentment must be a petty passion indeed, if it could stoop to such a helpless object as I am ; and for your love—good lack ! good lack !”

“And why good lack, with such a tone of contempt, lady ? Think you Buckingham cannot love, or has never been beloved in return ?”

“He may have thought himself beloved,” said the maiden ; “but by what slight creatures !—things whose heads could be rendered giddy by a playhouse rant—whose brains were only filled with red-heeled shoes and satin buskins—and who run altogether mad on the argument of a George and a star.”

“And are there no such frail fair ones in your climate, most scornful Princess ?” said the Duke.

“There are,” said the lady ; “but men rate

them as parrots and monkeys—things without either sense or soul, head or heart. The nearness we bear to the sun has purified, while it strengthened, our passions. The icicles of your frozen climate shall as soon hammer hot bars into ploughshares, as shall the foppery and folly of your pretended gallantry make an instant's impression on a breast like mine."

"You speak like one who knows what passion is," said the Duke. "Sit down, fair lady, and grieve not that I detain you. Who can consent to part with a tongue of so much melody, or an eye of such expressive eloquence!—You have known, then, what it is to love?"

"I know—no matter if by experience, or through the reports of others—but I do know, that to love as I would love, would be to yield not an iota to avarice, not one inch to vanity, not to sacrifice the slightest feeling to interest or to ambition; but to give up ALL to fidelity of heart and reciprocal affection."

"And how many women, think you, are capable of feeling such disinterested passion?"

"More, by thousands, than there are men who merit it," answered Zarah. "Alas! how often do you see the female, pale, and wretched, and degraded, still following with patient constancy the footsteps of some predominating tyrant, and submitting to all his injustice with the endurance of a

faithful and misused spaniel, which prizes a look from his master, though the surliest groom that ever disgraced humanity, more than all the pleasure which the world beside can furnish him? Think what such would be to one who merited and repaid their devotion."

"Perhaps the very reverse," said the Duke; "and for your simile, I can see little resemblance. I cannot charge my spaniel with any perfidy; but for my mistresses—to confess truth, I must always be in a cursed hurry if I would have the credit of changing them before they leave me."

"And they serve you but rightly, my lord; for what are you?—Nay, frown not; for you must hear the truth for once. Nature has done its part, and made a fair outside, and courtly education hath added its share. You are noble, it is the accident of birth—handsome, it is the caprice of Nature—generous, because to give is more easy than to refuse—well-apparelled, it is to the credit of your tailor—well-natured in the main, because you have youth and health—brave, because to be otherwise were to be degraded—and witty, because you cannot help it."

The Duke darted a glance on one of the large mirrors. "Noble, and handsome, and court-like, generous, well-attired, good-humoured, brave, and witty!—You allow me more, madam, than I have the slightest pretension to, and surely enough to

make my way, at some point at least, to female favour."

"I have neither allowed you a heart nor a head," said Zarah, calmly.—"Nay, never redden as if you would fly at me. I say not but nature may have given you both; but folly has confounded the one, and selfishness perverted the other. The man whom I call deserving the name, is one whose thoughts and exertions are for others, rather than himself,—whose high purpose is adopted on just principles, and never abandoned while heaven or earth affords means of accomplishing it. He is one who will neither seek an indirect advantage by a specious road, nor take an evil path to gain a real good purpose. Such a man were one for whom a woman's heart should beat constant while he breathes, and break when he dies."

She spoke with so much energy that the water sparkled in her eyes, and her cheek coloured with the vehemence of her feelings.

"You speak," said the Duke, "as if you had yourself a heart which could pay the full tribute to the merit which you describe so warmly."

"And have I not?" said she, laying her hand on her bosom. "Here beats one that would bear me out in what I have said, whether in life or in death."

"Were it in my power," said the Duke, who began to get farther interested in his visitor than

he could first have thought possible—"Were it in my power to deserve such faithful attachment, methinks it should be my care to requite it."

"Your wealth, your titles, your reputation as a gallant—all you possess, were too little to merit such sincere affection."

"Come, fair lady," said the Duke, a good deal piqued, "do not be quite so disdainful. Bethink you, that if your love be as pure as coined gold, still a poor fellow like myself may offer you silver in exchange—The quantity of my affection must make up for its quality."

"But I am not carrying my affection to market, my lord; and therefore I need none of the base coin you offer in change for it."

"How do I know that, my fairest?" said the Duke. "This is the realm of Paphos—You have invaded it, with what purpose you best know; but I think with none consistent with your present assumption of cruelty. Come, come—eyes that are so intelligent can laugh with delight, as well as gleam with scorn and anger. You are here a waif on Cupid's manor, and I must seize on you in name of the deity."

"Do not think of touching me, my lord," said the lady. "Approach me not, if you would hope to learn the purpose of my being here. Your Grace may suppose yourself a Solomon if you please; but I am no travelling princess, come from

distant climes, either to flatter your pride, or wonder at your glory."

"A defiance, by Jupiter!" said the Duke.

"You mistake the signal," said the 'dark ladye'; "I came not here without taking sufficient precautions for my retreat."

"You mouth it bravely," said the Duke; "but never fortress so boasted its resources but the garrison had some thoughts of surrender. Thus I open the first parallel."

They had been hitherto divided from each other by a long narrow table, which, placed in the recess of the large casement we have mentioned, had hitherto formed a sort of barrier on the lady's side, against the adventurous gallant. The Duke went hastily to remove it as he spoke; but, attentive to all his motions, his visitor instantly darted through the half-open window.

Buckingham uttered a cry of horror and surprise, having no doubt, at first, that she had precipitated herself from a height of at least fourteen feet; for so far the window was distant from the ground. But when he sprung to the spot, he perceived, to his astonishment, that she had effected her descent with equal agility and safety.

The outside of this stately mansion was decorated with a quantity of carving, in the mixed state, betwixt the Gothic and Grecian styles, which marks the age of Elizabeth and her successor; and though

the feat seemed a surprising one, the projections of these ornaments were sufficient to afford footing to a creature so light and active, even in her hasty descent.

Inflamed alike by mortification and curiosity, Buckingham at first entertained some thought of following her by the same dangerous route, and had actually got upon the sill of the window for that purpose ; and was contemplating what might be his next safe movement, when, from a neighbouring thicket of shrubs, amongst which his visitor had disappeared, he heard her chaunt a verse of a comic song, then much in fashion, concerning a despairing lover who had recourse to a precipice—

“ But when he came near,
Beholding how steep
The sides did appear,
And the bottom how deep ;
Though his suit was rejected,
He sadly reflected,
That a lover forsaken
A new love may get ;
But a neck that's once broken
Can never be set.”

The Duke could not help laughing, though much against his will, at the resemblance which the verses bore to his own absurd situation, and, stepping back into the apartment, desisted from an attempt which might have proved dangerous as well as

ridiculous. He called his attendants, and contented himself with watching the little thicket, unwilling to think that a female, who had thrown herself in a great measure into his way, meant absolutely to mortify him by a retreat.

That question was determined in an instant. A form, wrapped in a mantle, with a slouched hat and shadowy plume, issued from the bushes, and was lost in a moment amongst the ruins of ancient and of modern buildings, with which, as we have already stated, the demesne formerly termed York House, was now encumbered in all directions.

The Duke's servants, who had obeyed his impatient summons, were hastily directed to search for this tantalizing siren in every direction. Their master, in the meantime, eager and vehement in every new pursuit, but especially when his vanity was piqued, encouraged their diligence by bribes, and threats, and commands. All was in vain.— They found nothing of the Mauritanian Princess, as she called herself, but the turban and the veil; both of which she had left in the thicket, together with her satin slippers; which articles, doubtless, she had thrown aside as she exchanged them for others less remarkable.

Finding all his search in vain, the Duke of Buckingham, after the example of spoiled children of all ages and stations, gave a loose to the frantic vehemence of passion; and fiercely he swore ven-

geance on his late visitor, whom he termed by a thousand opprobrious epithets, of which the elegant phrase "Jilt" was most frequently repeated.

Even Jerningham, who knew the depths and shallows of his master's mood, and was bold to fathom them at almost every state of his passions, kept out of his way on the present occasion ; and, cabinetted with the pious old housekeeper, declared to her, over a bottle of ratafia, that, in his apprehension, if his Grace did not learn to put some control on his temper, chains, darkness, straw, and Bedlam, would be the final doom of the gifted and admired Duke of Buckingham.

CHAP. XXII.

——Contentions fierce,
Ardent, and dire, spring from no petty cause.

Albion.

THE quarrels between man and wife are proverbial ; but let not these honest folks think that connections of a less permanent nature are free from similar jars. The frolic of the Duke of Buckingham, and the subsequent escape of Alice Bridgenorth, had kindled fierce dissension in Chiffinch's family, when, on his arrival in town, he learned these two stunning events : " I tell you," he said to his obliging helpmate, who seemed extremely slightly moved by all which he could say on the subject, " that your d—d carelessness has ruined the work of years."

" I think it is the twentieth time you have said so," replied the dame ; " and without such frequent assurance, I was quite ready to believe that a very trifling matter would upset any scheme of yours, however long thought of."

“How on earth could you have the folly to let the Duke into the house when you expected the King?” said the irritated courtier.

“Lord, Chiffinch,” answered the lady, “ought not you to ask the porter, rather than me, that sort of question?—I was putting on my cap to receive his Majesty.”

“With the address of a madge-howlet,” said Chiffinch, “and in the meanwhile you gave the cat the cream to keep.”

“Indeed, Chiffinch,” said the lady, “these jaunts to the country do render you excessively vulgar! there is a brutality about your very boots! nay, your muslin ruffles being somewhat soiled, give to your knuckles a sort of rural rusticity, as I may call it.”

“It were a good deed,” muttered Chiffinch, “to make both boots and knuckles bang the folly and affectation out of thee.” Then speaking aloud, he added, like a man who would fain break off an argument, by extorting from his adversary a confession that he has reason on his side, “I am sure, Kate, you must be sensible that our all depends on his Majesty’s pleasure.”

“Leave that to me,” said she, “I know how to pleasure his Majesty better than you can teach me. Do you think his Majesty is booby enough to cry like a schoolboy because his sparrow has flown away? His Majesty has better taste. I am sur-

prised at you, Chiffinch," she added, drawing herself up, "who were once thought to know the points of a fine woman, that you should have made such a roaring about this country wench. Why, she has not even the country quality of being plump as a barn-door fowl, but is more like a Dunstable lark, that one must crack bones and all if you would make a mouthful of it. What signifies whence she came, or where she goes? There will be those behind that are much more worthy of his Majesty's condescending attention, even when the Duchess of Portsmouth takes the frumps."

"You mean your neighbour, Mistress Nelly," said her worthy helpmate; "but, Kate, her date is out. Wit she has, let her keep herself warm with it in worse company, for the cant of a gang of strollers is not language for a prince's chamber."

"It is no matter what I mean, or whom I mean," said Mrs Chiffinch; "but I tell you, Tom Chiffinch, that you will find your master quite consoled for loss of the piece of prudish puritanism that you would needs saddle him with; as if the good man were not plagued enough with them in Parliament, but you must, forsooth, bring them into his very bed-chamber."

"Well, Kate," said Chiffinch, "if a man were to speak all the sense of the seven wise masters, a

woman would find nonsense enough to overwhelm him with ; so I shall say no more, but that I would to Heaven I may find the King in no worse humour than you describe him. I am commanded to attend him down the river to the Tower to-day, where he is to make some survey of arms and stores. They are clever fellows who contrive to keep Rowley from engaging in business, for, by my word, he has a turn for it."

" I warrant you," said Chiffinch the female, nodding, but rather to her own figure reflected from a mirror, than to her politic husband, " I warrant you we will find means of occupying him that will sufficiently fill up his time."

" On my honour, Kate," said the male Chiffinch, " I find you strangely altered, and, to speak truth, grown most extremely opinionative. I will be happy if you have good reason for your confidence."

The dame smiled superciliously, but deigned no other answer, unless this were one,—" I shall order a boat to go upon the Thames to-day with the royal party."

" Take care what you do, Kate ; there are none dare presume so far but women of the first rank. Duchess of Bolton—of Buckingham—of——"

" Who cares for a list of names ? why may not I be as forward as the greatest B. amongst your string of them ?"

“Nay, faith, thou may'st match the greatest B. in Court already,” answered Chiffinch; “so e'en take thy own course of it. But do not let Chaubert forget to get some collation ready, and a *souper au petit couvert*, in case it should be commanded for the evening.”

“Ay, there your boasted knowledge of Court matters begins and ends.—Chiffinch, Chaubert, and Company;—dissolve that partnership, and you break Tom Chiffinch for a courtier.”

“Amen, Kate,” replied Chiffinch; “and let me tell you, it is as safe to rely on another person's fingers as on our own wit. But I must give orders for the water.—If you take the pinnace, there are the cloth-of-gold cushions in the chapel may serve to cover the benches for the day. They are never wanted where they lie.”

Madam Chiffinch accordingly mingled with the flotilla which attended the King on his voyage down the Thames, amongst whom was the Queen, attended by some of the principal ladies of the Court. The little plump Cleopatra, dressed to as much advantage as her taste could devise, and seated upon her embroidered cushions like Venus in her shell neglected nothing that effrontery and minauderie could perform to draw upon herself some portion of the King's observation; but Charles was not in the vein, and did not even pay her the slightest passing attention of any kind,

until her boatmen, having ventured to approach nearer to the Queen's barge than etiquette permitted, received a peremptory order to back their oars, and fall out of the royal procession. Madam Chiffinch cried for spite, and transgressed Solomon's warning, by cursing the King in her heart ; but had no better course than to return to Westminster, and direct Chaubert's preparations for the evening.

In the meantime, the royal barge paused at the Tower ; and, accompanied by a laughing train of ladies and of courtiers, the gay Monarch made the echoes of the old prison-towers ring with the unwonted sounds of mirth and revelry. As they ascended from the river side to the centre of the building, where the fine old Keep of William the Conqueror, called the White Tower, predominates over the exterior defences, Heaven only knows how many gallant jests, good or bad, were run on the comparison of his Majesty's state-prison to that of Cupid, and what killing similes were drawn between the ladies' eyes and the guns of the fortress, which, spoken with a fashionable *congé*, and listened to with a smile from a fair lady, formed the fine conversation of the day.

This gay swarm of flutterers did not, however, attend close on the King's person, though they had accompanied him upon his party on the river. Charles, who often formed manly and sensible re-

solutions, though he was too easily diverted from them by indolence or pleasure, had some desire to make himself personally acquainted with the state of the military stores, arms, &c. of which the Tower was then, as now, the magazine ; and, although he had brought with him the usual number of his courtiers, only three or four attended him on the scrutiny which he intended. Whilst, therefore, the rest of the train amused themselves as they might in other parts of the Tower, the King, accompanied by the Dukes of Buckingham, Ormond, and one or two others, walked through the well-known hall, in which is preserved the most splendid magazine of arms in the world, and which, though far from exhibiting its present extraordinary state of perfection, was even then an arsenal worthy of the great nation to which it belonged.

The Duke of Ormond, well known for his services during the Great Civil War, was, as we have elsewhere noticed, at present rather on cold terms with his Sovereign, who nevertheless asked his advice on many occasions, and who required it on the present amongst others, when it was not a little feared, that the Parliament, in their zeal for the Protestant religion, might desire to take the magazines of arms and ammunition under their own exclusive orders. While Charles sadly hinted at such a termination of the popular jealousies

of the period, and discussed with Ormond the means of resisting or evading it, Buckingham, falling a little behind, amused himself with ridiculing the antiquated appearance and embarrassed demeanour of the old warder who attended on the occasion, and who chanced to be the very same that escorted Julian Peveril to his present place of confinement. The Duke prosecuted his raillery with the greater activity, that he found the old man, though restrained by the place and presence, was rather upon the whole testy, and disposed to afford what sportsmen call *play* to his persecutor. The various pieces of ancient armour, with which the wall was covered, afforded the principal source of the Duke's wit, as he insisted upon knowing from the old man, who, he said, could best remember matters from the days of King Arthur downwards at the least, the history of the different warlike weapons, and anecdotes of the battles in which they had been wielded. The old man obviously suffered when he was obliged, by repeated questions, to tell the legends (often sufficiently absurd) which the tradition of the place had assigned to particular relics. Far from flourishing his partizan, and augmenting the emphasis of his voice, as was and is the prevailing fashion of these warlike Ciceroni, it was scarce possible to extort from him a single word concerning those topics on which their information is usually overflowing.

“Do you know, my friend,” said the Duke to him at last, “I begin to change my mind respecting you. I supposed you must have served as a Yeoman of the Guard since bluff King Henry’s time, and expected to hear something from you about the Field of the Cloth of Gold,—and I thought of asking you the colour of Anne Bullen’s breast-knot, which cost the Pope three kingdoms; but I am afraid you are but a novice in such recollections of love and chivalry. Art sure thou didst not creep into thy warlike office from some dark shop in the Tower-Hamlets, and that thou hast not converted an unlawful measuring-yard into that glorious halbert?—I warrant, thou canst not even tell one whom this piece of antique panoply pertained to?”

The Duke pointed at random to a cuirass which hung amongst others, but was rather remarkable from being better cleaned.

“I should know that piece of iron,” said the warder bluntly, yet with some change in his voice; “for I have known a man within side of it who would not have endured half the impertinence I have heard spoken to-day.”

The tone of the old man, as well as the words, attracted the attention of Charles and the Duke of Ormond, who were only two steps before the speaker. They both stopped, and turned round; the former saying at the same time,—“How now,

sirrah !—what answers are these ?—What man do you speak of ?”

“ Of one who is none now,” said the warder, “ whatever he may have been.”

“ The old man surely speaks of himself,” said the Duke of Ormond, closely examining the countenance of the warder, which he in vain endeavoured to turn away. “ I am sure I remember these features—Are not you my old friend, Major Coleby ?”

“ I wish your Grace’s memory had been less accurate,” said the old man, colouring deeply, and fixing his eyes on the ground.

The King was greatly shocked.—“ Good God !” he said, “ the gallant Major Coleby, who joined us with his four sons and a hundred and fifty men at Warrington !—And is this all we could do for an old Worcester friend ?”

The tears rushed thick into the old man’s eyes as he said in broken accents, “ Never mind me, sire ; I am well enough here—a worn-out soldier rusting among old armour. Where one old cavalier is better, there are twenty worse.—I am sorry your Majesty should know anything of it, since it grieves you.”

With that kindness, which was a redeeming point of his character, Charles, while the old man was speaking, took the partizan from him with his own hand, and put it into that of Buckingham,

saying, "What Coleby's hand has borne, can disgrace neither yours nor mine,—and you owe him this atonement. Time has been with him, that, for less provocation, he would have laid it about your ears."

The Duke bowed deeply, but coloured with resentment, and took an immediate opportunity to place the weapon carelessly against a pile of arms. The King did not observe a contemptuous motion, which, perhaps, would not have pleased him, being at the moment occupied with the veteran, whom he exhorted to lean upon him, as he conveyed him to a seat, permitting no other person to assist him. "Rest there," he said, "my brave old friend; and Charles Stuart must be poor indeed if you wear that dress an hour longer.—You look very pale, my good Coleby, to have had so much colour a few minutes since. Be not vexed at what Buckingham says, no one minds his folly.—You look worse and worse. Come, come, you are too much hurried by this meeting. Sit still—do not rise—do not attempt to kneel. I command you to repose yourself till I have made the round of these apartments."

The old cavalier stooped his head in token of acquiescence in the command of his Sovereign, but he raised it not again. The tumultuous agitation of the moment had been too much for spirits which had been long in a state of depression, and health

which was much decayed. When the King and his attendants, after half an hour's absence, returned to the spot where they had left the veteran, they found him dead, and already cold, in the attitude of one who has fallen easily asleep. The King was dreadfully shocked ; and it was with a low and faltering voice that he directed the body, in due time, to be honourably buried in the Chapel of the Tower. He was then silent, until he attained the steps in front of the arsenal, where the party in attendance upon his person began to assemble at his approach, along with some other persons of respectable appearance, whom curiosity had attracted.

“ This is dreadful,” said the King. “ We must find some means of relieving the distresses, and rewarding the fidelity of our suffering followers, or posterity will cry fie upon our memory.”

“ Your Majesty has had often such plans agitated in your Council,” said Buckingham.

“ True, George,” said the King. “ I can safely say it is not my fault. I have thought of it for years.”

“ It cannot be too well considered,” said Buckingham ; “ besides, every year makes the task of relief easier.”

“ True,” said the Duke of Ormond, “ by diminishing the number of sufferers. Here is poor old Coleby will no longer be a burthen to the Crown.”

“ You are too severe, my Lord of Ormond,” said the King, “ and should respect the feelings you trespass on. You cannot suppose that we would have permitted this poor man to hold such a situation, had we known of the circumstance ?”

“ For God’s sake, then, sire,” said the Duke of Ormond, “ turn your eyes, which have just rested on the corpse of one old friend, upon the distresses of others. Here is valiant old Sir Geoffrey Peveril of the Peak, who fought through the whole war, wherever blows were going, and was the last man, I believe, in England, who laid down his arms—Here is his son, of whom I have the highest accounts, as a gallant of spirit, accomplishments, and courage—Here is the unfortunate House of Derby—for pity’s sake, interfere in behalf of these victims, whom the folds of this hydra-plot have entangled, in order to crush them to death—rebuke the fiends that are seeking to devour their lives, and disappoint the harpies that are gaping for their property. This very day seven-night the unfortunate family, father and son, are to be brought upon trial for crimes of which they are as guiltless, I boldly pronounce, as any who stand in this presence. For God’s sake, sire, let us hope that, should the prejudices of the people condemn them, as it has done others, you will at last step between the blood-hunters and their prey.”

The King looked, as he really was, exceedingly perplexed.

Buckingham, between whom and Ormond there existed a constant and almost mortal quarrel, interfered to effect a diversion in Charles's favour. "Your Majesty's royal benevolence," he said, "needs never want exercise, while the Duke of Ormond is near your person. He has his sleeve cut in the old fashion, that he may always have store of ruined cavaliers stowed in it to produce at demand, rare old raw-boned boys, with Malmsey noses, bald heads, spindle shanks, and merciless histories of Edgehill and Naseby."

"My sleeve is, I dare say, of an antique cut," said Ormond, looking full at the Duke; "but I pin neither bravoës nor ruffians upon it, my Lord of Buckingham, as I see fastened to coats of the new mode."

"That is a little too sharp for our presence, my lord," said the King.

"Not if I make my words good," said Ormond. —"My Lord of Buckingham, will you name the man you spoke to as you left the boat?"

"I spoke to no one," said the Duke hastily—"nay, I mistake, I remember a fellow whispered in my ear, that one, who I thought had left London, was still lingering in town. A person whom I had business with."

"Was yon the messenger?" said Ormond, singling out from the crowd who stood in the courtyard, a tall dark-looking man, muffled in a large

cloak, wearing a broad shadowy black beaver hat, with a long sword of the Spanish fashion—the very Colonel, in short, whom Buckingham had dispatched in quest of Christian, with the purpose of detaining him in the country.

When Buckingham's eyes had followed the direction of Ormond's finger, he could not help blushing so deeply, as to attract the King's attention.

“What new frolic is this, George?” he said. “Gentlemen, bring that fellow forward. On my life, a truculent-looking caitiff.—Hark ye, friend, who are you? If an honest man, Nature has forgot to label it upon your countenance.—Does none here know him?”

‘With every symptom of a knave complete,
If he be honest he's a devilish cheat.’ ”

“He is well known to many, sire,” replied Ormond; “and that he walks in this area with his neck safe, and his limbs unshackled, is an instance, amongst many, that we live under the sway of the most merciful Prince of Europe.”

“Oddsfish! who is the man, my Lord Duke?” said the King. “Your Grace talks mysteries—Buckingham blushes—and the rogue himself is dumb.”

“That honest gentleman, please your Majesty,” replied the Duke of Ormond, “whose modesty makes him mute, though it cannot make him

blush, is the notorious Colonel Blood, as he calls himself, whose attempt to possess himself of your Majesty's royal crown took place at no very distant date, in this very Tower of London."

"That exploit is not easily forgotten," said the King; "but that the fellow lives, shews your Grace's clemency as well as mine."

"I cannot deny that I was in his hands, sire," said Ormond, "and had certainly been murdered by him, had he chosen to take my life on the spot, instead of destining me—I thank him for the honour—to be hanged at Tyburn. I had certainly been sped, if he had thought me worth knife or pistol, or anything short of the cord.—Look at him, sire! If the rascal dared, he would say at this moment, like Caliban in the play, 'Ho, ho, I would I had done it!'"

"Why, oddsfish! he hath a villainous sneer, my lord, which seems to say as much; but, my Lord Duke, we have pardoned him, and so has your Grace."

"It would ill have become me," said the Duke of Ormond, "to have been severe in prosecuting an attempt on my poor life, when your Majesty was pleased to remit his more outrageous and insolent attempt upon your royal crown. But I must conceive it as a piece of sovereign and supreme insolence on the part of this blood-thirsty bully,

by whomsoever he may be now backed, to appear in the Tower, which was the theatre of one of his villainies, or before me, who was well nigh the victim of another."

"It shall be amended in future," said the King.—"Hark ye, sirrah Blood, if you again presume to thrust yourself in the way you have done but now, I will have the hangman's knife and your knavish ears made acquainted."

Blood bowed, and, with a coolness of impudence which did his nerves great honour, he said he had only come to the Tower accidentally, to communicate with a particular friend on business of importance. "My Lord Duke of Buckingham," he said, "knew he had no other intentions."

"Get you gone, you scoundrelly cut-throat," said the Duke, as much impatient of Colonel Blood's claim of acquaintance as a town-rake of the low and blackguard companions of his midnight rambles, when they accost him amidst better company; "if you dare to quote my name again, I will have you thrown into the Thames."

Blood, thus repulsed, turned round with the most insolent composure, and walked away down from the parade, all men looking at him, as at some strange and monstrous prodigy, so much was he renowned for daring and desperate villainy. Some even followed him, to have a better survey of the

notorious Colonel Blood, like the smaller tribe of birds which keep fluttering round an owl when he appears in the light of the sun. But as, in the latter case, these thoughtless flutterers are careful to keep out of reach of the beak and claws of the bird of Minerva, so none of those who followed and gazed on Blood as something ominous, eared to bandy looks with him, or to endure and return the lowering and deadly glances which he shot from time to time on those who pressed nearest to him. He stalked on in this manner, like a daunted wolf, afraid to stop, yet unwilling to fly, until he reached the 'Traitors' gate, and getting on board a sculler which waited for him, he disappeared from their eyes.

Charles would fain have obliterated all recollection of his appearance, by the observation, "It were shame that such a reprobate scoundrel should be the subject of discord between two noblemen of distinction ;" and he recommended to the Dukes of Buckingham and Ormond to join hands, and forget a misunderstanding which rose on so unworthy a subject.

Buckingham answered carelessly, "That the Duke of Ormond's honoured white hairs were a sufficient apology for his making the first overtures to a reconciliation," and he held out his hand accordingly. But Ormond only bowed in return, and

said, "the King had no cause to expect that the Court should be disturbed by his personal resentments, since time would not yield him back twenty years, nor the grave restore his gallant son Ossory. As to the ruffian who had intruded himself there, he was obliged to him, since, by shewing that his Majesty's clemency extended even to the very worst of criminals, he strengthened his hopes of obtaining the King's favour for such of his innocent friends as were now in prison, and in danger; from the odious charges brought against them on the score of the Popish Plot."

The King made no other answer to this insinuation than by directing that the company should embark for their return to Whitehall; and thus took leave of the officers of the Tower who were in attendance, with one of those well-turned compliments to their discharge of duty, which no man knew better how to express; and issued at the same time strict and anxious orders for protection and defence of the important fortress confided to them, and all which it contained.

Before he parted with Ormond on their arrival at Whitehall, he turned round to him, as one who has made up his resolution, and said, "Be satisfied, my Lord Duke—our friends' case shall be looked to."

In the same evening the Attorney-General, and North, Lord-Chief-Justice of the Common Pleas,

had orders, with all secrecy, to meet his Majesty that evening on especial matters of state, at the apartments of Chiffinch, the centre of all affairs, whether of gallantry or business.

CHAP. XXIII.

Yet, Corah, thou shalt from oblivion pass ;
Erect thyself, thou monumental brass,
High as the serpent of thy metal made,
While nations stand secure beneath thy shade !
Absalom and Achitophel.

THE morning which Charles had employed in visiting the Tower, had been very differently occupied by those unhappy individuals, whom their bad fate, and the singular temper of the times, had made the innocent tenants of the state prison there, who had received official notice that they were to stand their trial in the Court of King's Bench at Westminster, on the seventh succeeding day. The stout old Cavalier at first only railed at the officer for spoiling his breakfast with the news, but evinced great feeling when he was told that Julian was to be put under the same indictment.

We intend to dwell only very generally on the nature of their trial, which corresponded, in the outline, with almost all those which were brought during the prevalence of the Popish Plot. That

is, one or two infamous and perjured evidences, whose profession of common informers had become frightfully lucrative, made oath to the prisoners' having expressed themselves interested in the great confederacy of the Catholics. A number of others brought forward facts or suspicions, affecting the character of the parties as honest Protestants and good subjects; and betwixt the direct and presumptive evidence, enough was usually extracted for justifying, to a corrupted court and a perjured jury, the fatal verdict of Guilty.

The fury of the people was, however, now begun to pass away, exhausted even by its own violence. The English nation differ from all others, indeed even from those of the sister kingdoms, in being very easily sated with punishment, even when they suppose it most merited. Other nations are like the tamed tiger, which, when once its native appetite for slaughter is indulged in one instance, rushes on in promiscuous ravages. But the English public have always rather resembled what is told of the sleuth-dog, which, eager, fierce, and clamorous in pursuit of his prey, desists from it so soon as blood is sprinkled upon his path.

Men's minds were now beginning to cool—the character of the evidence was more closely sifted—their testimonies did not in all cases tally—and a wholesome suspicion began to be entertained of men, who would never say they had made a full

discovery of all they knew, but avowedly reserved some point of evidence to bear on future trials.

The King also, who had lain passive during the first burst of popular fury, was now beginning to bestir himself, which produced a marked effect on the conduct of the Crown Counsel, and even the Judges. Sir George Wakeman had been acquitted in spite of Oates's direct testimony ; and public attention was strongly excited concerning the event of the next trial ; which chanced to be that of the Peverils, father and son, with whom, I know not from what concatenation, little Hudson the dwarf was placed at the bar of the Court of King's Bench.

It was a piteous sight to behold a father and son, who had been so long separated, meet under circumstances so melancholy ; and many tears were shed, when the majestic old man, for such he was, though now broken with years, folded his son to his bosom, with a mixture of joy, affection, and a bitter anticipation of the event of the incumbent trial. There was a feeling in the Court that for a moment overcame every prejudice and party feeling. Many spectators shed tears ; and there was even a low moaning, as of those who weep aloud.

Such as felt themselves sufficiently at ease to remark the conduct of poor little Geoffrey Hudson, who was scarce observed amid the preponderating interest created by his companions in misfortune, could not but notice a strong degree

of mortification on the part of that diminutive gentleman. He had soothed his great mind by the thoughts of playing the character which he was called on to sustain, in a manner which should be long remembered in that place ; and on his entrance, had saluted the numerous spectators, as well as the Court, with a cavalier air, which he meant should express grace, high-breeding, perfect coolness, with a certain contempt of the issue of their proceedings. But his little person was so obscured and jostled aside, on the meeting of the father and son, who had been brought in different boats from the Tower, and placed at the bar at the same moment, that his distress and his dignity were alike thrown into the back-ground, and attracted neither sympathy nor admiration.

The dwarf's wisest way to attract attention, would have been to remain quiet, when so remarkable an exterior would certainly have received in its turn the share of public notice which he so eagerly coveted. But when did personal vanity listen to the suggestions of prudence ?—Our impatient friend scrambled, with some difficulty, on the top of the bench intended for his seat ; and there, “ paining himself to stand a-tiptoe,” like Chaucer's gallant Sir Chaunticlere, he challenged the notice of the audience as he stood bowing and claiming acquaintance of his namesake Sir Geof-

frey the larger, with whose shoulders, notwithstanding his elevated situation, he was scarcely yet upon a level.

The taller Knight, whose mind was very much otherwise occupied, took no notice of these advances upon the dwarf's part, but sat down with the strong determination rather to burst his heart than evince any symptoms of weakness before Roundheads and Presbyterians; under which obnoxious epithets, being too old-fashioned to find out party designations of a newer date, he comprehended all persons concerned in his present trouble.

By Sir Geoffrey the larger's change of position, his face was thus brought on a level with that of Sir Geoffrey the less, who had an opportunity of pulling him by the cloak. He of Martindale Castle, rather mechanically than consciously, turned his head towards the large wrinkled visage, which, struggling between an assumed air of easy importance, and an anxious desire to be noticed, was grimacing within a yard of him. But neither the singular physiognomy, the nods and smiles of greeting and recognition into which it was wreathed, nor the strange little form by which it was supported, had at that moment the power of exciting any recollections in the old Knight's mind; and having stared for a moment at the poor little

man, his bulky namesake turned away his head without farther notice.

Julian Peveril, the dwarf's more recent acquaintance, had, even amid his own anxious feelings, room for sympathy with those of his little fellow-sufferer. Whenever he discovered that he was at the same terrible bar with himself, although he could not conceive how their causes came to be conjoined, he acknowledged him by a hearty shake of the hand, which the old man returned with affected dignity and real gratitude. "Worthy youth," he said, "thy presence is restorative, like the nepenthe of Homer, even in this syncopé of our mutual fate. I am concerned to see that your father hath not the same alacrity of soul as that of ours, which are lodged within smaller compass; and that he hath forgotten an ancient comrade and fellow-soldier, who now stands beside him to perform, perhaps, their last campaign."

Julian briefly replied, that his father had much to occupy him. But the little man—who, to do him justice, cared no more (in his own phrase) for imminent danger or death, than he did for the puncture of a flea's proboscis—did not so easily renounce the secret object of his ambition, which was to acquire the notice of the large and lofty Sir Geoffrey Peveril, who, being at least three inches taller than his son, was in so far possessed of that superior excellence, which the poor dwarf, in his

secret soul, valued before all other distinctions, although, in his conversation, he was constantly depreciating it. "Good comrade and namesake," he proceeded, stretching out his hand, so as again to reach the elder Peveril's cloak, "I forgive your want of reminiscence, seeing it is long since I saw you at Naseby, fighting as if you had as many arms as the fabled Briareus."

The Knight of Martindale, who had again turned his head towards the little man, and had listened, as if endeavouring to make something out of his discourse, here interrupted him with a peevish "Pshaw !"

"Pshaw !" repeated Sir Geoffrey the less ; "*Pshaw* is an expression of slight esteem,—nay, of contempt,—in all languages ; and were this a befitting place——"

But the Judges had now taken their places, the criers called silence, and the stern voice of the Lord-Chief-Justice (the notorious Scroggs) demanded what the officers meant by permitting the accused to communicate together in open court.

It may here be observed, that this celebrated personage was, upon the present occasion, at a great loss how to proceed. A calm, dignified, judicial demeanour, was at no time the characteristic of his official conduct. He always ranted and roared either on the one side or the other ; and of late, he had been much unsettled which side to

take, being totally incapable of anything resembling impartiality. At the first trials for the Plot, when the whole stream of popularity ran against the accused, no one had been so loud as Scroggs ; —to attempt to impeach the character of Oates or Bedlowe, or any other leading witness, he treated as a crime more heinous than it would have been to blaspheme the Gospel on which they had been sworn—it was a stifling of the Plot, or discrediting of the King's witnesses—a crime not greatly, if at all, short of high treason against the King himself.

But, of late, a new light had begun to glimmer upon the understanding of this interpreter of the laws. Sagacious in the signs of the times, he began to see that the tide was turning ; and that Court favour at least, and probably popular opinion also, were likely, in a short time, to declare against the witnesses, and in favour of the accused.

The opinion which Scroggs had hitherto entertained of the high respect in which Shaftesbury, the patron of the Plot, was held by Charles, had been definitively shaken by a whisper from his brother North to the following effect : “ His Lordship has no more interest at Court than your footman.”

This notice, from a sure hand, and received but that morning, had put the Judge to a sore dilem-

ma ; for, however indifferent to actual consistency, he was most anxious to save appearances. He could not but recollect how violent he had been on former occasions in favour of these prosecutions ; and being sensible at the same time that the credit of the witnesses, though shaken in the opinion of the more judicious, was, amongst the bulk of the people out of doors, as strong as ever, he had a difficult part to play. His conduct, therefore, during the whole trial, resembled the appearance of a vessel about to go upon another tack, when her sails are shivering in the wind, ere they have yet caught the impulse which is to send her forth in a new direction. In a word, he was so uncertain which side it was his interest to favour, that he might be said on that occasion to have come nearer a state of total impartiality than he was ever capable of attaining, whether before or afterwards. This was shewn by his bullying now the accused, and now the witnesses, like a mastiff too much irritated to lie still without baying, but uncertain whom he shall first bite.

The indictment was then read ; and Sir Geoffrey Peveril heard, with some composure, the first part of it, which stated him to have placed his son in the household of the Countess of Derby, a recusant Papist, for the purpose of aiding the horrible and blood-thirsty Popish Plot—with having had arms and ammunition concealed in his house—

and with receiving a blank commission from the Lord Stafford, who had suffered death on account of the Plot. But when the charge went on to state that he had communicated for the same purpose with Geoffrey Hudson, sometimes called Sir Geoffrey Hudson, now, or formerly, in the domestic service of the Queen Dowager, he looked at his companion as if he suddenly recalled him to remembrance, and broke out impatiently, "These lies are too gross to require a moment's consideration. I might have had enough of intercourse, though in nothing but what was loyal and innocent, with my noble kinsman, the late Lord Stafford—I will call him so in spite of his misfortunes—and with my wife's relation, the Honourable Countess of Derby. But what likelihood can there be that I should have colleagued with a decrepit buffoon, with whom I never had an instant's communication, save once at an Easter feast, when I whistled a hornpipe, as he danced on a trencher, to amuse the company?"

The rage of the poor dwarf brought tears in his eyes, while, with an affected laugh, he said, that instead of those juvenile and festive passages, Sir Geoffrey Peveril might have remembered his charging along with him at Wiggan-Lane.

"On my word," said Sir Geoffrey, after a moment's recollection, "I will do you justice, Master Hudson—I believe you were there—I think I

heard you did good service. But you will allow you might have been near one, without his seeing you."

A sort of titter ran through the Court at the simplicity of the larger Sir Geoffrey's testimony, which the dwarf endeavoured to control, by standing on his tiptoes, and looking fiercely around, as if to admonish the laughers that they indulged their mirth at their own peril. But perceiving that this only excited farther scorn, he composed himself into a semblance of careless contempt, observing, with a smile, that no one feared the glance of a chained lion; a magnificent simile, which rather increased than diminished the mirth of those who heard it.

Against Julian Peveril there failed not to be charged the aggravated fact, that he had been bearer of letters between the Countess of Derby and other Papists and priests, engaged in the universal, treasonable conspiracy of the Catholics; and the assault of the house at Moultrassie-Hall,—with his skirmish with Chiffinch, and his assault, as it was termed, on the person of John Jenkins, servant of the Duke of Buckingham, were all narrated at length, as so many open and overt acts of treasonable import. To this charge Peveril contented himself with pleading—Not Guilty.

His little companion was not satisfied with so simple a plea; for when he heard it read, as a part

of the charge applying to him, that he had received from an agent of the Plot a blank commission as Colonel of a regiment of grenadiers, he replied, in wrath and scorn, that if Goliath of Gath had come to him with such a proposal, and proffered him the command of the whole sons of Anak in a body, he should never have had occasion or opportunity to repeat the temptation to another. "I would have slain him," said the little man of loyalty, "even where he stood."

The charge was stated anew by the Counsel for the Crown; and forth came the notorious Doctor Oates, rustling in the full silken canonicals of priesthood, for it was at a time when he affected no small dignity of exterior decoration and deportment.

This singular man, who, aided by the obscure intrigues of the Catholics themselves, and the fortuitous circumstance of Godfrey's murder, had been able to cram down the public throat such a mass of absurdity as his evidence amounts to, had no other talent for imposture than an impudence which set conviction and shame alike at defiance. A man of sense or reflection, by trying to give his plot an appearance of more probability, would most likely have failed, as wise men often do in addressing the multitude, from not daring to calculate upon the prodigious extent of their credulity, especially where

the figments presented to them involve the fearful and the terrible.

Oates was by nature choleric ; and the credit he had acquired made him insolent and conceited. Even his exterior was portentous. A fleece of white periwig shewed a most uncouth visage, of great length, having the mouth, as the organ by use of which he was to rise to eminence, placed in the very centre of the countenance, and exhibiting to the astonished spectator as much chin below as there was nose and brow above the aperture. His pronounciation, too, was after a conceited fashion of his own, in which he accented the vowels in a manner altogether peculiar to himself.

This notorious personage, such as we have described him, stood forth on the present trial, and delivered his astonishing testimony concerning the existence of a Catholic Plot for subversion of the government and murder of the King, in the same general outline in which it may be found in every English history. But as the Doctor always had in reserve some special piece of evidence affecting those immediately on trial, he was pleased, on the present occasion, deeply to inculcate the Countess of Derby. " He had seen," as he said, " that honourable lady when he was at the Jesuits' College at Saint Omer's. She had sent for him to an inn, or *auberge*, as it was there termed—the sign of the Golden Lamb ; and had ordered him to break-

fast in the same room with her ladyship ; and afterwards told him, that, knowing he was trusted by the Fathers of the Society, she was determined that he should have share of her secrets also ; and therewithal, that she drew from her bosom a broad sharp-pointed knife, such as butchers kill sheep withal, and demanded of him what he thought of it for *the purpose* ; and when he, the witness, said for what purpose, she rapt him on the fingers with her fan, called him a dull fellow, and said it was designed to kill the King with.

Here Sir Geoffrey Peveril could no longer refrain his indignation and surprise. "Mercy of Heaven !" he said, "did ever one hear of ladies of quality carrying butchering knives about them, and telling every scurvy companion she meant to kill the King with them ?—Gentlemen of the Jury, do but think if this is reasonable—though, if the villain could prove by any honest evidence, that my Lady of Derby ever let such a scum as himself come to speech of her, I would believe all he can say."

"Sir Geoffrey," said the Judge, "rest you quiet—You must not fly out—passion helps you not here—the Doctor must be suffered to proceed."

Doctor Oates went on to state, how the lady complained of the wrongs the Derby had sustained from the King, and the oppression of her religion, and boasted of the schemes of the Jesuits and seminary priests ; and how they would be further-

ed by her noble kinsman of the House of Stanley. He finally averred that both the Countess and the Fathers of the seminary abroad, founded much upon the talents and courage of Sir Geoffrey Peveril and his son—the latter of whom was a member of her family. Of Hudson, he only recollected of having heard one of the fathers say, that although but a dwarf in stature, he would prove a giant in the cause of the Church.”

When he had ended his evidence, there was a pause, until the Judge, as if the thought had suddenly occurred to him, demanded of Doctor Oates, whether he had ever mentioned the name of the Countess of Derby in any of the previous informations which he had lodged before the Privy Council, and elsewhere, upon this affair?

Oates seemed rather surprised at the question, and coloured with anger, as he answered, in his peculiar mode of pronunciation, “ Whoy, no, maay laard.”

“ And pray, Doctor,” said the Judge, “ how came so great a revealer of mysteries as you have lately proved, to have suffered so material a circumstance as the accession of this powerful family to the Plot to have remained undiscovered ?”

“ Maay laard,” said Oates, with much effrontery, “ aye do not come here to have my evidence questioned as touching the Plaat.”

“ I do not question your evidence, Doctor,” said

Scroggs, for the time was not arrived that he dared treat him roughly ; “ nor do I doubt the existence of the *Plaat*, since it is your pleasure to swear to it. I would only have you, for your own sake, and the satisfaction of all good Protestants, explain why you have kept back such a weighty point of information from the King and country.”

“ Maay laard,” said Oates, “ I will tell you a pretty fable.”

“ I hope,” answered the Judge, “ it may be the first and last which you shall tell in that place.”

“ Maay laard,” continued Oates, “ there was once a faux, who having to carry a goose over a fraazen river, and being afraid the ice would not bear him and his booty, did caarry aaver a staane, my laard, in the first instaance, to proove the strength of the aice.”

“ So your former evidence was but the stone, and now, for the first time, you have brought us the goose ?” said Sir William Scroggs ; “ to tell us this, Doctor, is to make geese of the Court and Jury.”

“ I desoire your laardship’s honest construction,” said Oates, who saw the current changing against him, but was determined to pay the score with effrontery. “ All men knaw at what coast and praice I have given my evidence, which has been always, under Gaad, the means of awakening this poor naation to the dangerous state in which

it staunds. Many here know that I have been obliged to faartify my ladging at Whitehall against the bloody Papists. It was not to be thought that I should have brought all the story out at aance. I think your wisdom would have advised me otherwise."

"Nay, Doctor," said the Judge, "it is not for me to direct you in this affair; and it is for the Jury to believe you or not; and as for myself, I sit here to do justice to both—the Jury have heard your answer to my question."

Doctor Oates retired from the witness-box reddening like a turkey-cock, as one totally unused to have such accounts questioned as he chose to lay before the courts of justice; and there was, perhaps for the first time, amongst the counsel and solicitors, as well as the templars and students of law there present, a murmur, distinct and audible, unfavourable to the character of the great father of the Popish Plot.

Everett and Dangerfield, with whom the reader is already acquainted, were then called in succession to sustain the accusation. They were subordinate informers—a sort of under-spur-leathers, as the cant term went—who followed the path of Oates, with all deference to his superior genius and invention, and made their own fictions chime in and harmonize with his, as well as their talents could devise. But as their evidence had at no time

received the full credence into which the impudence of Oates had cajoled the public, so they now began to fall into discredit rather more hastily than their prototype, as the superadded turrets of an ill-constructed building are naturally the first to give way.

It was in vain that Everett, with the precision of a hypocrite, and Dangerfield, with the audacity of a bully, narrated, with added circumstances of suspicion and criminality, their meeting with Julian Peveril in Liverpool, and again at Martindale Castle. It was in vain they described the arms and accoutrements which they pretended to have discovered in old Sir Geoffrey's possession; and that they gave a most dreadful account of the escape of the younger Peveril from Moultrassie-Hall, by means of an armed force.

The Jury listened coldly, and it was visible that they were but little moved by the accusation; especially as the Judge, always professing his belief in the Plot, and his zeal for the Protestant religion, was ever and anon reminding them that presumptions were no proofs—that hearsay was no evidence—that those who made a trade of discovery were likely to aid their researches by invention—and that without doubting the guilt of the unfortunate persons at the bar, he would gladly hear some evidence brought against them of a different nature. “Here we are told of a riot and an escape

achieved by the younger Peveril, at the house of a grave and worthy magistrate, known, I think, to most of us. Why, Master Attorney, bring ye not Master Bridgenorth himself to prove the fact, or all his household, if it be necessary?—A rising in arms is an affair over public to be left on the hearsay tale of these two men—though Heaven forbid that I should suppose they speak one word more than they believe! They are the witnesses for the King—and, what is equally dear to us, the Protestant religion—and witnesses against a most foul and heathenish Plot. On the other hand, here is a worshipful old knight, for such I must suppose him to be, since he has bled often in battle for the King,—such, I must say, I suppose him to be, until he is proved otherwise. And here is his son, a hopeful young gentleman—we must see that they have right, Master Attorney.”

“Unquestionably, my lord,” answered the Attorney. “God forbid else! But we will make out these matters against these unhappy gentlemen in a manner more close, if your lordship will permit us to bring in our evidence.”

“Go on, Master Attorney,” said the Judge, throwing himself back in his seat. “Heaven forbid I hinder proving the King’s accusation! I only say, what you know as well as I, that *de non apparentibus et non existentibus eadem est ratio*.”

“ We shall then call Master Bridgenorth, as your lordship advises, who I think is in waiting.”

“ No !” answered a voice from the crowd, apparently that of a female ; “ he is too wise and too honest to be here.”

The voice was distinct as that of Lady Fairfax, when she expressed herself to a similar effect on the trial of Charles the First ; but the researches which were made on the present occasion to discover the speaker were unsuccessful.

After the slight confusion occasioned by this circumstance was abated, the Attorney, who had been talking aside with the conductors of the prosecution, said, “ Whoever favoured us with that information, my lord, had good reason for what they said. Master Bridgenorth has become, I am told, suddenly invisible since this morning.”

“ Look you there now, Master Attorney,” said the Judge—“ This comes of not keeping the crown witnesses together and in readiness—I am sure I cannot help the consequences.”

“ Nor I either, my lord,” said the Attorney, pettily. “ I could have proved by this worshipful gentleman, Master Justice Bridgenorth, the ancient friendship betwixt this party, Sir Geoffrey Peveril, and the Countess of Derby, of whose doings and intentions Doctor Oates has given such a deliberate evidence. I could have proved his

having sheltered her in his Castle against a process of law, and rescued her, by force of arms, from this very Justice Bridgenorth, not without actual violence. Moreover, I could have proved against young Peveril the whole affray charged upon him by the same worshipful evidence."

Here the Judge stuck his thumbs into his girdle, which was a favourite attitude of his on such occasions, and exclaimed, "Pshaw, pshaw, Master Attorney—Tell me not that you *could* have proved this, and you *could* have proved that, or that, or this—Prove what you will, but let it be through the mouths of your evidence. Men are not to be licked out of their lives by the rough side of a lawyer's tongue."

"Nor is a foul Plot to be smothered," said the Attorney, "for all the haste your Lordship is in. I cannot call Master Chiffinch neither, as he is employed on the King's especial affairs, as I am this instant certiorated from the Court at Whitehall."

"Produce the papers, then, Master Attorney, of which this young man is said to be the bearer," said the Judge.

"They are before the Privy Council, my Lord."

"Then why do you found on them here?" said the Judge—"This is something like trifling with the Court."

“ Since your Lordship gives it that name,” said the Attorney, sitting down in a huff, “ you may manage the cause as you will.”

“ If you do not bring more evidence, I pray you to charge the Jury,” said the Judge.

“ I shall not take the trouble to do so,” said the Crown Counsel. “ I see plainly how the matter is to go.”

“ Nay, but be better advised,” said Scroggs. “ Consider, your case is but half proved respecting the two Peverils, and doth not pinch on the little man at all, saving that Doctor Oates said that he was in a certain case to prove a giant, which seems no very probable Popish miracle.”

This sally occasioned a laugh in the Court, which the Attorney-General seemed to take in great dudgeon.

“ Master Attorney,” said Oates, who always interfered in the management of these lawsuits, “ this is a plain and absolute giving away of the cause—I must needs say it, a mere stoifling of the Plaat.”

“ Then the devil who bred it may blow wind into it again, if he lists,” answered the Attorney-General ; and, flinging down his brief, he left the Court, as in a huff with all who were concerned in the affair.

The Judge having obtained silence, for a mur-

mur arose in the Court when the Counsel for the prosecution threw up his brief, began to charge the Jury, balancing, as he had done throughout the whole day, the different opinions by which he seemed alternately swayed. He protested on his salvation that he had no more doubt of the existence of the horrid and damnable conspiracy called the Popish Plot, than he had of the treachery of Judas Iscariot ; and that he considered Oates as the instrument under Providence of preserving the nation from all the miseries of his Majesty's assassination, and of a second Saint Bartholomew, acted in the streets of London. But then he stated it was the candid construction of the law of England, that the worse the crime, the more strong should be the evidence. Here was the case of accessories tried, whilst their principal, for such he should call the Countess of Derby, was unconvicted and at large ; and for Doctor Oates, he had but spoke of matters which personally applied to that noble lady, whose words, if she used such in passion, touching aid which she expected in some treasonable matters from these Peverils, and from her kinsmen, or her son's kinsmen, of the House of Stanley, may have been but a burst of female resentment—*Dulcis Amaryllidis ira*, as the poet hath it. Who knoweth but Doctor Oates did mistake—he being a gentleman of a comely counte-

nance and easy demeanour—this same rap with the fan as a chastisement for lack of courage in the Catholic cause, when, peradventure, it was otherwise meant, as Popish ladies will put, it is said, such neophytes and youthful candidates for orders, to many severe trials. “I speak these things jocularly,” said the Judge, “having no wish to stain the reputation either of the Honourable Countess or the Reverend Doctor; only I think the bearing between them may have related to something short of high treason. As for what the Attorney-General hath set forth of rescues and force, and I wot not what, sure I am, that in a civil country, when such things happen, such things may be proved; and that you and I, gentlemen, are not to take them for granted gratuitously. Touching this other prisoner, this *Galfridus minimus*, he must needs say,” he continued, “he could not discover even a shadow of suspicion against him. Was it to be thought so abortive a creature would thrust himself into depths of policy, far less into stratagems of war? They had but to look at him to conclude the contrary—the creature was, from his age, fitter for the grave than a conspiracy—and by his size and appearance, for the inside of a raree-show, than the mysteries of a plot.”

The dwarf here broke in upon the Judge by

force of screaming, to assure him that he had been, simple as he sat there, engaged in seven plots in Cromwell's time; and, as he proudly added, with some of the tallest men of England. The matchless look and air with which Sir Geoffrey Hudson made this vaunt, set all a-laughing, and increased the ridicule with which the whole trial began to be received; so that it was amidst shaking sides and watery eyes that a general verdict of Not Guilty was pronounced, and the prisoners dismissed from the bar.

But a warmer sentiment awakened among those who saw the father and son throw themselves into each other's arms, and, after a hearty embrace, extend their hands to their poor little companion in peril, who, like a dog, when present at a similar scene, had at last succeeded, by stretching himself up to them and whimpering at the same time, to secure to himself a portion of their sympathy and gratulation.

Such was the singular termination of this trial. Charles himself was desirous to have taken considerable credit with the Duke of Ormond for the evasion of the law, which had been thus effected by his private connivance; and was both surprised and mortified at the coldness with which his Grace replied, that he was rejoiced at the poor gentlemen's safety, but would rather have had the King

redeem them like a prince, by his royal prerogative of mercy, than that his Judge should convey them out of the power of the law, like a juggler with his cups and balls.

END OF VOLUME FIFTH.

